

Those Limerick Bells

by Finbar Crowe

*Limerick City, river wedded,
City of the pealing bells,
Booming out the Christian message,
Filling Clareside's hills and dells.
Sweet the sound of Mount Alphonsus
Sweeping down on Shannonside;
Old St. Mary's mellow pealing
Mingling with the rushing tide.*

*Down the years their sounds have echoed
Crisp-clear in the fading light,
As the ringers in their belfries
Practice through the frosty night.
Tunefully their notes resounding,
Flooding Thomond, Garryowen,
Chime an ageless theme for lovers
Walking on Cleeve's Bank, alone.*

*Sad then, my lot, forced to wander,
Haunted by those Limerick bells,
In London, New York, Perth they echoed,
Exile reawoke their spell.
But oh! the joy when sailing homeward,
Past Kiltrush, by Glin and Foynes,
Hearing faintly on the full tide,
Limerick's welcome in her chimes.*

*Let them ring out, fill the city,
Swell her proud breast with sweet sounds,
Keep them swinging, bell-ropes dancing,
Let them ring their happy rounds.
And when Time calls let me hear them
Softly, through the dim twilight,
Plaintive tones that bid bon-voyage,
As I fade into the night.*

