



## A SKATING INTERLUDE.

"Six months ago it was," said he—  
"It seems a century of changes—  
Since here, beneath this very tree,  
We watched the moonlit mountain ranges.  
I hate this chattering, skating crowd  
That so profanes our silent river,  
The sacred spot where once we vowed  
A faith that should endure forever !"

"And so we meet again," said he,  
"In the same place where then we parted;  
How the old time comes back to me !  
The words that left us broken hearted."  
Swift fell the answer from her mouth :  
" Speak for yourself—if you remember,  
The wind blows north that then blew south,  
And June dies long before December !"

"And does a woman's heart," said he,  
" Change like the wind or summer weather ?  
Yon moon is yet the same, you see,  
That shone upon us here together."  
" Ah, no ! " she said, "that summer moon  
Beamed with a radiance mild and tender,  
While this forgets the warmth of June  
In winter's far and frozen splendor."

"And does that mean farewell ? " said he ;  
" Is it a warning to remember  
That dream of June can never be  
Which dies in such a chill December ?  
Your very words ! " " Yet, even so,"  
She said, controlling tears with laughter,  
" Do you forget December snow  
Melts in the June that follows after ? "

" But shall I go or stay ? " said he,  
Searching her face with doubt and wonder ;  
"And if you care at all for me,  
Why play at keeping us asunder ? "  
" Because "—she smiled, while softly fell  
Above her eyes their deep-fringed curtain—  
" I did not mean, at first, but—well,  
You seemed so odiously certain ! "

KATE PUTNAM OSGOOD.