

The Professor's Dilemma.

By S. Jean Walker. Specially Written for The Western Home Monthly.

PROFESSOR Archibald Douglas sat in his study looking in perplexity at a letter in his hand, that was evidently giving him great concern. At length he placed it on the table before him, and leaning back in his chair "Well, this is something more difficult of solution than any abstruse problem

of science. I am completely baffled."

Taking the letter again, he slowly read some of it aloud, as though endeavoring to solve the fact of its being written.

"Your letter was a great surprise to me." "Not half as much as yours is to me," he commented, "considering I never wrote one."

"I honor, respect and trust you," he read from the letter.

"I am willing to be your wife, and will do all in my power to be worthy

of you, and a kind mother to your children."

The professor bowed his head on his hands, and with a broken sob in his voice he breathed, with love and sorrow in his words: "Oh, Amy, Amy! I have asked no one to take your place. Believe me, dear."

After a time he raised his head and his eyes had a deep shadow in them. He picked up the letter that had fluttered carelessly to the floor and read the signature, "Helen McVicar Gordon." After a few moments' thought, he said to himself, "A good, old name; I seem to have heard it before." Then, as remembrance dawned on his mind, he exclaimed: "Why I met her at sister Kate's last Christmas. She was a tall, fine-looking woman, and so re-

finer and intelligent that I quite enjoyed talking with her. Yes, I remember, too, that she seemed to possess considerable cultured, common sense, and—" He paused abruptly, and looking at the letter, said decidedly, "She must have had some cause to write this. She speaks of my letter to her. That's it. I never wrote one. What does it all mean anyway? There is certainly a mystery somewhere. I must go to see Kate about it. She always knows just the best way to advise one. I'll make arrangements to go at once."

The next afternoon he arrived at his sister's, Mrs. McLaren's, only to find her absent on an extended visit. He confided his troubles to his brother-in-law, who listened sympathetically, and when Professor Douglas had finish-

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