

CHAPTER XXXVII.

BISHOP MACEACHERN IN FAILING HEALTH.—HIS LAST ILLNESS.—HIS DEATH AND BURIAL.

The beginning of the year 1835 found Bishop MacEachern gradually succumbing to the infirmities of age. The trying labors of so many years had told upon him, and he went about his duties with a sense of his inability to do justice to the cause which lay so near his heart. His step had lost its former elasticity, his erstwhile erect figure had drooped under the burden of years, while to mount his horse or ascend his gig required a slow and painful effort. The splendid health that he had hitherto enjoyed was now considerably impaired, and in his letters to the Archbishop of Quebec, he complains of feeling unwell, a complaint now found for the first time in a correspondence extending over a period of almost forty-five years.

Still he does not desist from active labor. "I must, at my advanced age," he writes, "after hard labor for forty-four years and seven months in this Island and adjacent coasts, serve a mission as well as the young gentlemen on the Island do." And besides this mission which comprised the whole of King's County, he was obliged to travel New Brunswick and the Magdalen Islands, in order to discharge his episcopal duties.

Finding his infirmities increasing and wishing that his flock should not suffer on that account, he writes to the Archbishop of Quebec, and refers at some length to the advisability of having a Coadjutor Bishop appointed for the Diocese of Charlottetown.

He mentions particularly the difficulties that lie in the way of such an appointment, the principal one of which seems to be, how to provide suitable support for the new prelate. He pictures the clergy