

## Missionary Cabinet.

### ZINZENDORF AND THE MORAVIANS.

THE MORAVIAN CHURCH, which has so long stood in the front rank of the Missionary army, traces its history to the time of John Huss, the great apostle and Martyr of Bohemia, who entered upon his public career in the beginning of the fifteenth century. In 1402, Huss had commenced a movement, the import of which he himself little dreamed. Following in the wake of Wicliff, he placed the Bible above the authority of Pope or Council, and had unconsciously taken the road to the Reformation. He was early joined by Jerome of Prague, between whom and Huss there continued unbroken friendship until the fiery ordeal of the stake sundered them. But the fire that consumed the body of Huss proved to be "the candle of Bohemia." Within four years of his death the bulk of the nation embraced the faith for which he died. His followers were divided in sentiment. One party entirely broke with Rome and made the Scriptures their only standard, while the other maintained a nominal connection with the Vatican. The former came to bear the name of "Taborites," from a hill near Prague which they frequented and which bore some resemblance to the Scriptural Tabor. In the year 1455 the Taborites formed themselves into a distinct church under the name of *The Unitas Fratrum*, or United Brethren. During the persecutions of the seventeenth century the Brethren were all but exterminated; the few who survived were driven into exile. In the beginning of the eighteenth century a few of them were still found in Moravia where, like the Waldenses of the Alps, they maintained under great difficulties a church organization as nearly apostolical as possible. A fresh revival sprung up among them, followed by renewed persecution. Most of them, therefore, resolved to emigrate. They sought for a place where they could worship God unmolested, but that was hard to find. They were recommended to place themselves in communication with Count Zinzendorf, a German nobleman who had recently purchased a large estate called Belthesdorf, in Upper Lusatia, who, on learning their distressed circumstances, generously offered them permission to settle on a part of his

estate which he set apart for their use. This was the beginning of the famous *Herrnhut*.

Nicolas Lewis, Count of Zindendorf, the descendant of a very old noble family in Austria, was born on the 26th May, 1700, near Nurnberg. He had the advantage of a pious home and was early instructed in wisdom's ways. He said to himself, "My dear Grandma kept me ten years in her own chamber: My aunt Henrietta prayed with me morning and evening, and passed the day in accord with prayer. In my fourth year I began to seek God with such earnestness as accorded with my childish notions." At that time he would write tender letters to the Saviour and would throw them out of the window, confident that the Lord would receive and read them. When ten years of age he was sent to the grammar-school at Halle. About this time, 1715, Ziegenbalg, the Danish missionary, came on a mission to Halle, bringing with him some baptized Malays from Malabar. This incident imparted to his naturally sanguine temperament a glow of enthusiasm. His mind became bent on active measures for the good of others. With a few comrades, like-minded, he formed an association which they named "The Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed."—a name singularly appropriate to the work in which he was afterwards to engage. At sixteen he went to the University of Wittenberg where he cultivated the noble gifts which fitted him for honourable service in the State. After a time he removed to Utrecht. On his journey thither he saw in Dusseldorf picture gallery a painting of the *Ecce Homo*, with the inscription in Latin,—"This have I done for thee: what hast thou done for me?" He was greatly impressed by it, and his mind was drawn heavenward. He had just come of age and been married when the request of the Moravians reached him. The little colony at Herrnhut increased year by year, and soon the Count began to realize in these people the materials from which he was to shape the enterprise for which God had chosen and endowed him. As they grew in numbers the difficulty of managing such a mixed community also increased, for aspiring minds arose among them that threatened the new foundation with destruction through fanaticism, schism, and conflict. Zindendorf endeavoured to persuade them to unite with the Lutheran Church; but they said "No.—