



R. D. BLACKMORE

***GEORGE
BOWRING
- A TALE
OF CADER
IDRIS***

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George Bowring - A Tale Of Cader Idris

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CHAPTER I.

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When I was a young man, and full of spirits, some forty years ago or more, I lost my best and truest friend in a very sad and mysterious way. The greater part of my life has been darkened by this heavy blow and loss, and the blame which I poured upon myself for my own share in the matter.

George Bowring had been seven years with me at the fine old school of Shrewsbury, and trod on my heels from form to form so closely that, when I became at last the captain of the school, he was second to me. I was his elder by half a year, and “sapped” very hard, while he laboured little; so that it will be plain at a glance, although he never acknowledged it, that he was the better endowed of the two with natural ability. At that time we of Salop always expected to carry everything, so far as pure scholarship was concerned, at both the universities. But nowadays I am grieved to see that schools of quite a different stamp (such as Rugby and Harrow, and even Marlborough, and worse of all peddling Manchester) have been running our boys hard, and sometimes almost beating them. And how have they done it? Why, by purchasing masters of our prime rank and special style.

George and myself were at one time likely, and pretty well relied upon, to keep up the fame of Sabrina's crown, and hold our own at Oxford. But suddenly it so fell out that both of us were cut short of classics, and flung into this unclassic world. In the course of our last half year at school and when we were both taking final polish to stand for