

being dyed black and his removal of the dye are implausible; but on a symbolic level, they signify in the history of Australia as much as Crusoe's friendship with Friday does in the history of Europe: 'it was fully a week before his person had resumed its former appearance, when the newly-formed cuticle, though extremely tender at first, appeared to him much more delicate and pure than ever he could recollect it to have been before; and it produced such a youthful effect in his appearance as quite surprised him when he looked at his face in a mirror.' (p. 301) Pink purity which is the result of the removal of the black man; the continuing emphasis on youthfulness in a young society already nearly two hundred years old; and the mirror of engrossed self-approval — these are some recognisable Australian characteristics. To have expressed them so early and so completely in a novel of realism is Tucker's claim to our attention as Australia's first symbolist.

## *Fragment*

My father lifted  
a mouthorgan up  
to the wind on a hill

and the wind of Bohemia  
sighed a few  
frail and blue notes

man and child  
in the harebell light  
frail ghosts . . . faint tune

GERDA MAYER