Chapter V

POINT OF VIEW

Point of view is the primary technique which involves the narration of the story. Authors in general make use of either first or third person or dramatic narration. Though there are only two categories in point of view, there are immense possibilities. Selection of the point of view contributes the major basis to the success of the story as the contents of the story are finally processed through the consciousness of the teller or observer. So, if the point of view is not appropriate it is likely to defeat the very purpose of the story.

Katherine Mansfield does not resort to the conventional types of narration. Her narration evolves out of the content of the story. Somerset Maugham says:

...Katherine Mansfield had no outstanding gifts for telling one (story). Her gifts lie elsewhere. She could take a situation and wring from it all the irony, bitterness, pathos, and unhappiness that were inherent in it.¹

Katherine Mansfield uses first person narration in some of her early stories. But when she evolves she resolves the problem of her narration quite ingenuously. She breaks off from the traditional modes and cultivates the "indirect open form" where in she places the reader right in the midst of the story. "It is obvious that story which takes the reader at once into the midst of things gives a dramatic quality which wins and holds the reader."\(^2\) The reader is left free to draw his own inferences. Katherine Mansfield makes the placing of the reader quite abrupt and unguarded.

The technique is a direct offshoot of expressionism in painting. Katherine Mansfield does not stick to a particular mode of writing anywhere throughout her career. As a result, it becomes difficult to categorise her output for the purpose of analysis. The only conclusion one can make at the end of a keen reading of stories is that there is a gradual growth and maturity towards the end of her career. Her expression becomes sharp and deep. In her last story "The Canary" she also makes use of the diary confessional mode. It provides an intimate recounting of the details. Since it is a private

\(^2\) Ibid., p.186.
chronicle, the character feels free to record the events through its own consciousness.

Katherine Mansfield shows the promise of her mature story craft even in the early sketches. "Enna Blake", one of her stories written as a child, is in the form of a report, but it has the following passage in dramatic mode:

Lucy was on the platform to welcome them. "I am so glad you have come" she said mother thought your music may prevent you". They had a pleasant drive to Sunny Glenn; It was 9 O' clock when they reached

The story opens with the declaration of Enna to her mother about the rain and progresses in the third person narration until it breaks off for the dramatic passage already quoted.

The "Tiredness of Rosabel" is structured after the psychological sketch of the 1890s. It is done around a single scene. Flash-back and day-dream are used to

recall the past and imagine the future respectively. The story is conducted almost entirely through the indirect presentation of inner consciousness. It is viewed on three time levels. It has the remembered past the incident in the millinery shop where Rosabel works. The time level of the present corresponds to the reality of Rosabel's every day existence—her uncomfortable room, meagre earnings tedious commuting and so on. The time level of the future is in the imaginative presence of Rosabel in "Vie de luxe" of the customer.

Katherine Mansfield's German Pension sketches are the result of her feminine recoil from the German way of life. Their origin can be traced to the illustrations of a German magazine called Jugend. Her sketches are the result of her verbal translation of the illustrations in her favourite magazine during her stay in Germany. She does not value them much, she herself calls them 'positively juvenile'.

Roger Fry's first exhibition of the paintings of post-impressionists which opened on 8th Nov. 1910 played an important role in the literary art of Katherine Mansfield. "The experience of stepping from London's
November gloom into that luminous exhibition was a sudden liberation, a shaking free from Victorian and Edwardian attitudes into wholly new ways of seeing. It is London's first real experience of 'modern art', the whole at once being termed, 'degenerate', the work of madmen, an insult to the intelligence, and so on. In The New Age Arnold Bennet writes:

I have permitted myself to suspect that supposing some young writer were to come along and do in words what these young men have done in paint, I might conceivably be disgusted with really the whole of modern fiction, and I might have to begin again. This awkward experience will in all probability not happen to me, but it might happen to a writer younger than me. At any rate it is a fine thought.

Katherine Mansfield takes up the freedom offered by the painters and uses it in her stories. In a letter to Dorothy Brett she expresses herself on the post-impressionists:

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4. A. Alpers The Life of Katherine Mansfield (New York: Viking 1930), p.120.
That picture seemed to reveal something that I had not realised before I saw it. It lived with me afterwards. It still does. That and another of a sea captain in a flat cap. They taught me something about writing which was queer, a kind of freedom or rather, a shaking free.\(^6\)

The parallel between a painting and a short story is closer. The short story takes place over a relatively short period of time and can therefore be more readily grasped as an aesthetic whole. Its spatial and structural elements can be exploited for aesthetic effect. Katherine Mansfield finds the right kind of inspiration with the expressionists. Several stories that appeared after 1910, have the influence of Post-Impressionism in their new freedom, both of subject matter and treatment. "The Woman at the Store", "Ole Underwood", "Millie" and "Old Tar" are attempts to explore Katherine Mansfield's New Zealand background least acceptable and accessible to London audience. "The Woman" is mainly concerned with the atmosphere and its events happen outside the limits of the story. The

\(^6\) Katherine Mansfield to Dorothy Brett, 5 Dec. 1921.
'drama' is conveyed, diagrammatically, by means of a child's drawing, a device which is emblematic of the oblique narration:

'I done the one she told me she'd shoot me if I did. Don't care! Don't care!

The kid had drawn the picture of the woman shooting at a man with a rook rifle and then digging a hole to bury him in.

She jumped off the counter and squirmed about on the floor biting her nails (p.572).

The story begins abruptly and ends casually and in between nothing happens. "The Woman" is not a conventional story with a discernible plot. The story has langueurs and abrupt narrative transitions and omission of expected narrative detail. In "Ole Underwood" the attention is focussed on the psychology of the rural character. The story is based on her early encounter with New Zealand down to the mad wind which portends psychological crisis in Katherine Mansfield's work. In "Millie" also the action is minimal. The atmosphere and Millie's psychological state play the vital role in the story. "Millie" "Ole Underwood" and "The Woman" are
aesthetic wholes in spite of their plotlessness. They deal with the pathological states of the people.

"The Little Girl" presupposes Katherine Mansfield's much admired "Prelude" method. She also writes some of the satirical sketches which remind us of her first person narration of her German Pension they are 'Pension Seguin", "Violet", and "Bains Turcs".

The next story that deserves attention in the development of her narrative art is "The Wind Blows". The point of view shifts in quick succession:

A big black steamer with a long loop of smoke steaming, with the potholes lighted, with lights everywhere, is pulling out to sea. The wind does not stop her; she cuts through the waves, making for the open gate between the pointed rocks that leads to ... It's the light that makes her look so awfully beautiful and mysterious... They are on board leaning over the rail arm in arm.

"... Who are they?"

"... Brother and sister

"Look Bogey, there is the town. Doesn't it look small? There's the post-office clock chiming for the last time. There is the esplanade
where we walked that windy day. Do you remember? I cried at my music lesson that day how many years ago! Good bye, little island good bye..."

Now the dark stretches a wing over the tumbling water. They can't see those two any more. Good-bye, good bye. Don't forget... But the ship is gone now.

The wind - the wind. (p.110)

This passage continues in the time level of the story that precedes with its ordinary trivial events. As the brother and sister watch the steamer, they imagine their future selves. We are transported into their adult future when the same day is recalled from a long distance in time. As the children become adults, they are simultaneously addressed by their childhood selves. Clare Hanson and Andrew Gurr observe:

"The Wind Blows" is a highly sophisticated and modernist story, blending certain elements of the earlier work, but achieving a new intensity. This is partly due to the New Zealand subject matter, but also to the ever more assured technique. Not only does Katherine Mansfield here employ the Symbolist and Expressionist devices of earlier stories, but she
uses present-tense narrative as a more active element in the story's meaning and structure. The sustained present tense of the narration is played off against its shifting time levels, involving us in the sense of loss and regret that pervades the close of the story.  

"The Wind Blow's is produced between "The Aloe" and its revised form "Prelude". The shifting point of view observed here becomes more pronounced and purposive in "Prelude". In "Prelude", Katherine Mansfield rejects the descriptive analysis in favour of 'revelation through the slightest gesture'. Each detail of the character, setting and scene contributes to the evocation of a specific mood or feeling. She worked deliberately towards this art of exclusion and suggestion. The organisation of the story is 'random' which is her innovatory contribution to the art of the short story. In fact, each episode in the story is played off against the next to form a complex web of thematic parallels and contrasts. In the words of A. Alpers,

'In its final form "Prelude"s peculiar magic probably derives, in part from the effect

of shifting focus as the view point moves from the inner thoughts of one character to those of another. The narrator seems able to be everywhere and nowhere all at once, without confusion.  

Katherine Mansfield drops us into the midst of a scene and leaves it to us for a subjective evaluation, retaining the objectivity of the situation:

There is not an inch of room for Lottie and Kezia in the buggy. When Pat swung them on top of the luggage they wobbled, the grandmother's lap was full and Linda Burnell could not possibly have held a lump of child on hers for any distance. Isabel, very superior was perched beside the new handyman on the driver's seat. Holdalls, bags and boxes were filed upon the floor. "These are absolute necessities that I will not let out of my sight for one instant" said Linda Burnell, her voice trembling with fatigue and excitement.

Lottie and Kezia stood on the patch of lawn just inside the gate all ready for the fray in their coats with brass anchor buttons

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and little round caps with battle ship ribbons. Hand in hand they stared with round solmon eyes, first at the absolute necessities and then at their mother.

We shall simply have to leave them. That is all. We shall simply have to cast them off said Lind Burnell. (p.11)

As Alpers puts it, "Katherine Mansfield is outside the event and ... She is making a presentation of her own sensibility in every line, and this is of equal interest with the event, as in a lyric poem... she flits from the inside of one character's mind to another one and the reader, treated as some one who already knows them all, is tricked into familiarity before having time to feel lost". 9

Katherine Mansfield's visit to Garsington on the eve of Christmas in 1916 offers another turn to her narrative art. She composes a dramatic piece called "Laurels". This becomes a formidable influence on her stories later.

"Bliss" has a single main action. There is

9. Ibid., p.191.
no clearly defined authorial presence in this story. Katherine Mansfield effaces the narrator-figure as nearly as possible. The story revolves around the character of Bertha Young, a fashionable married woman of thirty. It is cast in indirect free form. The narrator's voice merges with the thoughts, vocabulary and the very mode of perception of the central character. The method can be seen in the opening sentence:

'Although Bertha Young was thirty she still had moments like this when she wanted to run instead of walk, to take dancing steps on and off the pavement, to bowl a hoop, to throw something up in the air and catch it again, or to stand still and laugh at nothing at nothing simply'. (p.91)

Here Bertha is verbalising her own experiences and testing her own descriptions against the imaginary audience for whom she is always performing usually with a sense of inadequacy. Katherine Mansfield explains this process to Murry in her letter of 14 March 1918:

'What I meant (I hope I don't sound high folutin) was Bertha not being an artist, was yet artist manquee enough to realise that these words and expressions were not and could
not be hers. They were, as it were, quoted by her, borrowed with... an eye brow. yet she is none of her own'

The story is without closer:

""your lovely pear tree - pear tree - pear tree!"

Bertha simply ran over to the long windows "Oh what is going to happen now?" she cried. But the pear tree was as lovely as ever and as full of flowers and still. (p.105)

"Yet through its internal structure - through repetition of imagery, juxtraposition and parallelism, the word play - the text itself leads us to the inevitable conclusion that the most likely change for Bertha will be that of no change. The last paragraph of the story shows us the technique of muted direction in miniature".10

"Jene parle pas francais" is the only major story where Katherine Mansfield employs a narrative in

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the first person. The narrator in this story is one of the most complex of all dramatic roles she has constructed. Raoul Duquette is in concentrated form of all the aspects of the "free artist" which she had witnessed, as much in herself as in any one from Bohemian Paris. Through Dequette she explores some of the assumptions and forms of behaviour which had influenced the evolution of her art. Self-parody shapes the construction of the whole story to an extent very difficult to calculate precisely. Duquette is shaping his narrative as an epiphany, a revelation springing from the 'cued moment'. To him, the moment of recognition brings him to life as an artist. At the point of recognition,

Suddenly I realised that quite apart from myself, I was smiling. Slowly I raised my head and saw myself in the mirror opposite, yes, there I sat, leaning on the table, smiling my deep sly smile, the glass of coffee with its vague plume of steam before me and beside it the ring of white saucer with two pieces of sugar.

I opened my eyes very wide. There I had been for all eternity, as it were and now at last I was coming to life... (p.63)
Here it is difficult to locate where Duquette ends and Katherine Mansfield begins. This makes the story the most complex and inaccessible in her entire oeuvre Clare Hanson and Andrew Gurr observe:

As with any dramatic monologue it is not possible to separate the narrator from the narrative. The story he tells, of the disastrous collapse of Dick's and Mouse's escapade together, is primarily an account of himself. It is an account of failures. For all the central epiphany, it is a series of misunderstandings and blurred communications starting with the title phrase itself Duquette's story is one of spasmodic, reluctant connections. He is a Parisian, inhabiting a carnivorous jungle.11

"The Man Without a Temperament" is narrated in the third person around the husband. His mind reverts to the land he has left, in explicit nostalgia. There are flashbacks to England, to the English country in November, and to the late summer day in London.

"Miss Brill" is structurally related to "Bliss" as a story in which a shift of feeling in one character is conveyed in a single scene. With the unity of action,

11. Ibid., p.68.
time and place, the shorter stories appear more realistic than the episodic pieces like "Prelude" and "Je ne". These are structured according to the symbolic pattern at the same time furthering the narrative. There are also narrative suppressions and ellipses. These add to the brevity and the subjectivity of the reader's impressions.

The narrator is out of the story. This can be seen even at the end of the story.

The box that the fur come out of was on the bed. She unclasped the necklet quickly; quickly without looking, laid it inside. But when she put the lid on she thought she heard something crying (p.336).

The narration provides objective information. The closing perception of the story is Miss Brill's. It is entirely in accord with her neurotic and fantastic imagination. It is entirely unsentimental, suggesting very firmly the fear and horror which attend the suppression of any human being.

The entire story is as Katherine Mansfield puts it, is oblique and delicately suggestive:
'I might write about a boy eating strawberries or a woman combing her hair on a windy morning and that is the only way I can ever mention (deserts of vast eternity)".

"Poison" is written almost at the same time as "Miss Brill". Murry feels that it is 'not wholly successful'. Set beside her outline of what she wanted to create, the finished story seems flimsy. It provokes Katherine Mansfield's longest commentary:

'The story is told by (evidently) a worldly rather cynical (not wholly cynical) man against himself (but not altogether) when he was so absurdly young. You know how young by his idea of what woman is....

I suppose I haven't brought it off in "Poison". It wanted to light, light hand - and then with that newspaper a sudden... let me see, lowering of it all - just what happens in promiscuous love after passion. A glimpse of staleness. And the story is told by the man who gives himself away and hides his traces at the same moment.'

In "Poison" the author does not have a sufficiently clear idea of her central character. The narrator's present character is not clearly established. The excursions into the past and explorations of his former self do not quite succeed. The uncertainty over the narrator disrupts the formal texture of the story to the extent that in some passages we are not even sure that it is the narrator who is speaking. The perceptions and vocabulary seem to float free of the supposed narrative context:

"Who are you? who was she?" - she was woman

...On the first warm evening in spring, when lights shone like pearls through the lilac air and voices murmured in the fresh flowering gardens, it was she who sang in the tall house with tulle curtains. As one drove in the moonlight through the foreign city, hers was the shadow that fell across the quivering gold of shutters. When the lamp was lighted, in the newborn stillness her-steps passed your door...

(p.687)

There is a loss in sharpness of focus and in consequence there is no clear sense of direction. It is through situation and the structure of communication that the truth is realised. The narrator's realisation of the
truth coincides necessarily with his realisation of unreliability: the two realisations must be interdependent:

'But I lifted my glass and drank, sipped rather, sipped slowly, deliberately, looking at the dark head and thinking of - postmen and blue beetles and farewells that were not farewells and ...

Good God! was it fancy? No it was not fancy. The drink tasted chill, bitter, queer. (p.691)

Structurally, "The Daughters of Late Colonel" is a sophistication of the "Prelude" method. It 'unfolds' with an even more functional appropriateness. Each section of the story develops by a seemingly random association of ideas corresponding to the random thought processes of the daughters. The inconsequential sequence covers by the end, all the revelatory incidents following the Colonel's death.

The effect of the wayward scenes is cumulative. The first half, which deals with the events of the week following the colonel's death, is like a door slowly opening. The second, which is chiefly set at the end of the week, sees it close again. The first half has an
ascending scale of victimisers, from Nurse Andrews, through Kate to the colonel himself, the prime mover of victimisations:

"Why should not we be weak for once in our lives Jug? It's quite excusable. Let's be weak - be weak Jug. It's much nicer to be weak than to be strong."

And then she did one of those amazingly bold things that she'd done about twice before in their lives; she marched over to the wardrobe, turned the key, and took it out of the lock. Took it out of the lock and held it to Josephine, showing Josephine, by her extraordinary smile that she knew what she'd done, she'd risked deliberately father being in there among his overcoats. (p.272)

The second half brings in the different perspective of Cyril, the nephew equally intimated by the Colonel and Kate with her noise and her insistence on decisions in Colonel's most malign legacy. Kate's bouncing is like Colenel's thumping. In the final scene the sun intrudes its light on their consideration of the new pattern offered by life now that the Colonel is dead. The trap, the daughters are in, is deeper, more basic in a social perspective which reaches far beyond the bounds
of their capacity to recognise it. And the telling of the story richly deserves the praise David Daiches gave it, as a landmark in the history of the short story.

"The Voyage" belongs to a period of experimentation that led up to the intense creativity which produced "At the Bay", "The Garden-Party" and "The Doll's House". "The Voyage" is a child's account of the event that followed her mother's death. It is free from the randomness of the previous story that is just discussed. It is crystal clear like "The Garden-Party". It is complete with no links outside to other stories. The whole life of Fenella in the story is concentrated into one experience. It is not the memory of a real experience. It is a kind of possession. Intensely imagined and complete and as it is, it forms the total possession of a total experience.

The story opens on the Wellington docks where the Picton boat is waiting:

....It was dark on the old wharf, very dark; the wool sheds, the cattle trucks, the cranes standing up so high, the little squat railway engine, all seemed carved out of solid darkness (p.321)
By contrast the wharf in the Marlborough Sounds on the other side of Cook Strait is bright, tiny, and almost empty of life.

And now the landing-stage came out to meet them. Slowly it swam towards the Picton boat, and a man holding a coil of rope and a cart with a small drooping horse another man sitting on the step, came too. (pp. 328-29).

The voyage takes Fenella from the adult size and bustle of the capital into the child sized world of her grand parents. It is a journey from fear to security.

"At the Bay" is constructed like "The Daughters of the Late Colonel" and "Prelude" as a sequence of twelve linked episodes. In all of them indirect free form is used to explore the consciousness of the central characters. It has a limit of narrative framework which functions thematically. The entire story occurs in the course of a single day like in The Waves of Virginia Woolf. Perhaps it plans to reveal the essential life of the people during the course of a day, even in one epiphanic moment. The frame of a day deepens the resonance of the story and makes transparent the universal references of
the particular events described. For instance Jonathan Trout is seeking the meaning of his life.

"... And all the while I am thinking like that moth, or that butterfly, or what ever it is, 'the shortness of life!' I've one night or one day, and there's this vast dangerous garden, waiting out there, undiscovered unexplored". (p.237)

As "Prelude" shows the family's move to a new home, "At the Bay" contrives the family to reflect in their different ways on the mysteries of birth, love and death. The story opens in the freshness of a dewy sunshine and ends in the poetry of night, sea and moon. The opening of the story is fresh and exciting. There is no narrator telling us of things. We are directly placed inside the events of the story. The sudden raising of the curtain makes us feel that we are the sole observer. The master of Katherine Mansfield here is Theocritus.

In "A Married Man's story" Katherine Mansfield makes a special use of first person narrative. Like Raoul Duquette in "Jene", the narrator here is a literary man and draws attention to his own activity in writing:

'To live like this... I write those words
very carefully, very beautifully. For some reason I feel inclined to sign them, or to write underneath- Trying a New Pen'. (p.435)

The narrator of "A Married Man's story plays with his sense of the means of expression open to him. He tells everything in a series of images. He dismisses the first set of images as unsatisfactory as they leave only 'the traces of my feeling'. Like Duquette in "Jene" he is given to self dramatisation:

'...It tempts me - it tempts me terribly. Scene: The supper table. My wife has just handed me my tea. I stir it, lift the spoon, idly chase and then carefully capture a speck of tea leaf, and having brought it ashore, I murmur quite gently, "How long shall we continue to live - like - this?" and immediately there is that famous blinding and deafening roar...'. (pp.435-36)

The relationship between narrator and reader is most unusual of the story. Here, as in "The Canary", the writer seems to reach a point at which the speech of the narrator breaks reading conventions by not merely involving us in the experience described but explicitly demanding our complicity in its creation. This effect is
produced by a variety of stylistic manoeuvres, for example, the consistent use of the present tense to place us in close relationship with the narrator at the opening of each scene:

Do you remember your childhood? I am always coming across those marvellous accounts by writers who declare that they remember "every thing". I certainly don't. The dark stretches, the blanks are much bigger than the bright glimpses. I seem to have spent much of time like a plant in a cupboard. Now and again, when the sun shone, a careless hand thrust me out on to the window sill...(p.442)

A good deal of the pleasure is generated by the narrator's appeal to the reader. The reader is unused to the text's need of him:

...."A Married Man's Story" is not self confident and self contained text, like a novel by George Eliot, for example. It constitutes instead a continual appeal to the reader. In "Jene parle pas francais" and "Poison" Katherine Mansried questioned the relationship between experience and language. Here she questions the concept of experience itself as a valid external touchstone or point of reference for reader and writer. There is no guarantee that they share
the same world: On these grounds as well as linguistic ones the communicability of experience cannot be assumed or assured.  

During the course of the story the narrator is driven back and back into the past to seek the causes of his present state. Unlike Raoul Duquette he accepts fully that the past influences the present. The story proceeds as a quest following the clues left by memory. The story is incomplete. As an exploration of solipsism in both thematic and formal sense it is a story which in a sense fittingly has no ending. Murry was right in this case to call the story 'unfinished yet somehow complete'.

"The Garden-Party" is about an adolescent's encounter with death, demanding a more orthodox narrative than "At the Bay" or "The Daughters of Late Colonel". It is told as a straight forward narrative. It is not divided into scenes or sections. Laura is the central figure. Everything is observed through her consciousness.

Laura makes a single journey through the events

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of the day concluding with the real journey out of her garden and down the dark lane. The narrative structure has the sequence in time and the cohesion of a single viewpoint.

"The Fly" received a wealth of criticism on its various aspects. Here Katherine Mansfield employs the 'irrelevant descriptive details' in order to make the external settings of the story 'historically authentic'. The 'green chair' on which Mr. Woodifield sits and minute description of the son's photograph are some of the irrelevant details.

"The Fly" has a symbolistic patterning crucial in shaping the distinctive form and texture of the narrative. The method is same as that of "The Wind Blows" and "Prelude". The shaping idea of the story is rigid.

Katherine Mansfield's development of indirect freeform is her important contribution to the art of short story. It allowed directness and immediacy, enabling the intrusive presence of the author-as-narrator to appear and disappear from the text as in "Miss Brill":

....Miss Brill put up her hand and touched her
fur. Dear little thing! It was nice to feel it again she had it taken out of its box that afternoon, shaken out the moth powder, given it a good brush and rubbed the life back into the dim little eyes. "What has been happening to me?" said the sad little eyes. Oh! how sweet it was to see them snap at her again from the red eider down! (p. 331)

Katherine Mansfield's first person narrative differs from the conventional mode where the "I" or the teller is divorced from the action and functions as a witness or commentator. In Mansfield, the author-narrator is most often the central character. We see this in "Jene" as well as "A Married Man's Story". Even in German Pension stories, the narrator observes and points to the heart of the stories.

"The Canary" is presented entirely as a spoken monologue. It moves further away from the normal narrative conventions. In "The Canary" both the author-narrator and the audience disappear. In the case of "Jene" and "The Married Man's Story" the reader/audience assumes a role contributing to the progress of the story. "The Canary" has the transcription of speech. The reader has to overhear the speech not intended for him. Till the
last point the monologue in "The Canary" proceeds in a disjointed form. The speaker is gradually collecting her thoughts. But still the speech is cumulative. Everything leads up to the final paragraph where the author makes a statement about her own art:

'...All the same, without being morbid, and giving way to - to memories and so on, I must confess that there does seem to me something sad in life. It is hard to say what it is. I don't mean the sorrow that we all know, like illness and poverty and death. No, it is something different. It is there deep down, part of one, like one's breathing. However hard I work and tire myself, I have only to stop to know it is there, waiting. I often wonder if everyone feels the same. One can never know. But isn't it extraordinary that under his sweet joyful little singing it was just this sadness?- An.' what is it that I heard. (pp.431-32)

In this final speech Katherine Mansfield achieves the effect of poetic intensity retaining the comparatively simple vocabulary of the woman speaker. The sense of human isolation in this formal context forces communication between the reader and writer. "The
Canary" achieves a reach and depth with the technical invention and exploratory quality of the story. To Katherine Mansfield every story is an experiment. She believes in the constant experimentation:

... There is a little which the amateur novelist shares (but how differently) with the artist: it is that of experimentalist. However deep the knowledge a writer has of his characters, however finely he may convey that knowledge to us, it is only when he passes beyond it, when he begins to break new ground, to discover for himself, to experiment, that we are enthralled. The false writer begins as an experimentalist; the true artist ends as one.15

Katherine Mansfield's use of point of view in her stories has been varied. There is no consistent development that can be traced in terms of her stories corresponding to her growth as an artist. It is very difficult tosay how she begins, as most of her early work has been consigned to flames. Most of her stories are in first or third person narration. But she resorts to dramatic mode under the influence of Theocritus from "Prelude" onwards.16

In the light of the existing published stories we can see the influence of psychological sketch on her narration of the early pieces. The mode is later dropped for a more effective narration highlighting the atmosphere of the stories as in "The Woman", "Ole Underwood" and "Millie". This brings her stories closer to the post-impressionistic paintings. After relapsing to first person narration in a few of her stories - "Pension Seguin", "Violet" and "Bains Turcs", she practises the multiple view points in "The Wind Blows". This is later shaped into the multivalent narration in "Prelude" and followed with a little more perfection and sophistication in "The Daughters of the Late Colonel" and "At the Bay". Katherine Mansfield also has stories like "The Voyage" and "The Garden-Party" where the narration is traditional with a beginning, middle and an end. Her practice of first person male point of view in "Jeune" and "The Married man's Story" breaks new ground involving the reader's complicity in the creation of the stories.

By means of her varied experimentation Katherine Mansfield endeavours throughout her career to reach the ultimate in literary expression. She has been looking at the narrative moments from various mirrors in
various angles. She continued to change the angles of vision and reflection time and again only to effect a better exploration of the character and action under consideration. Her efforts resulted in a few monuments made out of her narrative moments.