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“ANGLES AND PYRAMIDS” (1936)

The craze for taking photographs at unusual angles grows apace. Or, perhaps it should rather be said, the greed of editors of illustrated papers for such photographs is unappeased. The news films in the picture houses show sporting and other events now as seen by the eagle from its eyrie, and then as seen by the rabbit from its burrow. There are right angles, acute angles, obtuse angles, everything is where you don't expect it to be, every picture a puzzle picture, scale and proportion are of no account, and it takes you a full minute to decide whether a given subject is a toothbrush or a seaside pier. Hogarth, in his “Analysis of Beauty,” declared that the painter if left to his choice “takes it on the angle rather than in front,” but the camera, with its unusual opportunities for angle views has carried it beyond the wildest Hogarthian dream. Some day, perhaps soon, we shall find on the picture page a piece of work which staggers us by its unusualness—something we only dimly remember to have seen before. It will take us some moments before we realise that this is indeed a photograph of something taken in the ordinary way, at normal eye-level, without twist or obliquity or any such thing. There are those who say that the best thing about wireless is the joy of silence when it leaves off; and certainly we have reason to be grateful to eccentricity in art, because it makes the normal appear so enjoyable when we see it.

The Amateur Photographer and Cinematographer, 12 août 1936, vol. 82, n° 2492, « Topics of the Week », p. 155.