

EYES AND TEETH IN THE NAVY

REVISION OF OFFICIAL STANDARDS

Over 11 pages of current Admiralty Fleet Orders are devoted to revised standards of eyesight now required for naval ratings and Royal Marines. The standards are those which have been in force for some time, but are now collated in one general order, and the requirements in certain branches where there have been variations are now made uniform.

To recruit the larger numbers of men and boys now required for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines it has not been necessary to reduce the high physical standards which have been enforced for many years, except in a very minor degree. Only 25 per cent. of those who apply are accepted for entry.

With certain exceptions, such as the seaman and signal branches, ratings may wear glasses to enable them to carry out their duties if they are medically fit in other respects, each case being considered on its merits by the commanding officer. Glasses will be supplied free. For men who require to use spectacles when anti-gas respirators are worn the side pieces are to be flattened so as to prevent leakage, and the fit of all such frames is to be tested in a gas chamber.

It is also announced that as a temporary expedient the dental standards for candidates for entry in a man's rating who are fit in other respects, and who are willing to receive treatment to render them fit for general service, have been modified. Artificers and artisans for direct entry are not to be rejected for dental defects which can be cured by treatment, which will include the free supply of dentures if necessary. Candidates for the rating of ordinary seaman (special service) who are wearing satisfactory well-fitting permanent dentures to remedy a deficiency of natural teeth may be accepted, provided that any natural teeth present are sound or readily conservable. In other men ratings, candidates who are below the normal dental standard only to the extent of the loss of one pair of opposing molars may be accepted.