

KENDO forum

by Musashi of the
Shinto Ryu

The year 1964 promises to be one of great activity in the Kendo field throughout the world. It is this year that it is hoped a World Kendo Federation will be created embracing the Kendo organisations in Japan, the United States of America, Brazil, Hawaii, the Phillipines, Formosa, Korea and Europe. Now, at the beginning of February, I hear of widespread interest in Australia and New Zealand and of the intention to develop dojos there! At last the English-speaking *budoka* are stirring.

Here in England the Shinto-Ryu *dojo* has well and truly launched a Junior Group with eight youngsters aged between 6½ years and 14 years. The youngest is also the most experienced at the moment, an unusual event, I'm sure. Great interest is felt in Japan at this new extension to the study of Kendo here. In the United States there are many children learning Kendo, especially among the *dojo's* of North and South California. By all accounts the discipline in these *dojo's* is stricter than in Japan and this is considered to be an excellent thing by many sensei, since it produces a strong *esprit de corps* in the juniors and they enjoy and take pride in learning Kendo well.

Bushi Budokai, Portsmouth. This *dojo* with its tremendously keen membership, celebrates its first anniversary on the 14th March, and Mr. Vic Cook (1st Kyu), has

arranged for an Anniversary Shiai in honour of the occasion. A large contingent of kendoka from other *dojos* will be attending—and there is a possibility of the Mayor of Portsmouth, himself being present.

Miss Etsuko Horie, 2nd Dan, Mr. Jock Hopson and Mr. Keith Feltham, will show Kendo kata to add to what promises to be a most successful evening.

Toda Shigemasa (1563-1625). Toda Shigemasa was a very noted swordsman in his period and was known to his contemporaries as "Meijin Echigo" or the Master Echigo—(his full name and title was Toda Echigo-no-kami Shigemasa. His father was a master of the Chujo-ryu style of kenjutsu and Shigemasa succeeded him in this, developing his technique and originating the Toda-ryu. He served three generations of the Maeda clan.

It is related that on one occasion Maeda Toshitsune asked Shigemasa to teach him the secret technique of *Muto-tori*. (This was a technique of grasping the opponent's hand in such a manner as to prevent the opponent attacking and without using one's own sword.) Maeda Toshitsune took a sword and stood facing Shigemasa. But the fencing master said:

"As this is a secret technique,

I am worried that someone may see me doing it now and so learn the art. Suppose that somebody is watching from behind the sliding door"?

Toshitsune instinctively turned round to look. At that instant Shigemasa took hold of Toshitsune's hand, remarking, "This is the secret technique of Muto-ryu"!



The youngest kendoka at the Shinto-Ryu Kendo dojo showing jodan kamae.