



THE MEDIC

His Home and His Training

His home: Oklahoma City. His training: extensive. Here in words and pictures is presented the story of how the University's School of Medicine trains tomorrow's doctors.

THEY SEEM LIKE any other hospitals. Clean. Sterile. A little forbidding.

Young men and women hurry about checking patients, writing up case histories, reassuring their charges with their efficiency, conferring with older doctors in corridors and examining rooms.

Patients, vexed by names, ask for the "young doctor" or the "old doctor."

Down the hall comes a patient returning from surgery . . . a family to visit a relative . . . a person who understands suffering intimately.

The sights and sounds are those of any well-administered hospital with one major difference. These hospitals—Crippled Children's and University Hospitals, are a part of the University of Oklahoma Medical School and they are called "Teaching Hospitals." Here through a series of clerkships, a period through which junior and senior med students assist with patient examination, treatment and care, students work under controlled but practical conditions with patients.

But the tail is wagging the dog.

About ten blocks south and a few west of the Capitol Build-

ing, in Oklahoma City, is Oklahoma's monument to medical science. Grouped on either side of one of Oklahoma City's main thoroughfares is an elaborate establishment known in bulk as the "Medical Center." The heart of the Medical Center is the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine and University Hospitals. (See photo for other facilities of Medical Center.)

The School was initiated in 1900 as a "pre-clinical medical school," or one that offered only the first two years of medical training. A merger in 1910 with Epworth Medical College produced a full 4-year curriculum but the first two years were taught on the Norman campus. In 1928, the present Medical School building was completed and the full course was moved into one home.

The purpose of the School has undergone few radical changes. The School catalog states: "The courses of the School of Medicine are organized to offer theoretical and practical training with the aim of making its graduates competent general practitioners . . ." That was always the major objective.

How the objective is pursued is subject to change and is one of the continuing issues facing the Medical School. "One of our

Oklahoma City Medical Center. On left side of street (top to bottom), University Hospital, Nursing School, Crippled Children's Hospital. Right side (top to bottom), Medical School, Medical Research Foundation, VA Hospital.

biggest problems at the School," Dean Mark Everett said recently, "is adapting the curriculum to modern needs. We're already asking the medical student to do about twice as much work as a college student pursuing an undergraduate degree. But we must keep up with the needs of the public."

And the School is doing a fine job of adapting to the public's needs. It would be a fair estimate to say that the School of Medicine enjoys a high ranking among sister institutions. One estimate puts the Medical School in upper one-third of all similar institutions.

Dr. Everett has an explanation for the School's present standing: "We have a fine faculty here, men and women who are interested in teaching. If you want one of the reasons why the school is showing so much progress, call it the 'Spirit of Teaching'. The faculty deserves great credit."

"And speaking of credit, we owe much to the Alumni Association of the School," the Dean continued. "The members have been very active and have contributed time and money to keep the School going forward. A good example of a program that

we couldn't have without their cooperation is the preceptorship plan."

(The preceptorship program is designed to give senior students an opportunity to work with practicing physicians in Oklahoma towns. The doctor pays the student's room and board and the student assists him in his practice for an 11-week period to learn the practical steps of medical practice.)

An over-simplification of the medical student's training program is: Freshman and sophomore years, theoretical training in classroom and laboratory; junior and senior years, practical training in University Hospitals. It is over-simplified because there is no black and white distinction between theory and practice but it serves as a broad outline.

On the following pages, the *Sooner Magazine* reports in pictures a portion of the Medical School's training program for medical students. It is not intended to be definitive. It is intended to show that the School of Medicine is fulfilling its main objective: To offer theoretical and practical training with the aim of making its graduates competent general practitioners.

Dr. Robert M. Bird, associate professor of medicine, lectures a freshman class. Classrooms are modern with rows of seats rising upward to allow students a clear view of teacher and instruction area. Note professor's microphone equipment.

