



COPYRIGHT 1910 BY DR. S.I. RAINFORTHNY.
VITILIGO

VITILIGO

Synonyms: Leucoderma; Leucopathia; Leucasmus; Achroma.

Vitiligo is characterized by the loss of pigment in sharply circumscribed areas of the skin. The achromatic spots appear first as little round or oval white dots. They gradually increase in size and often coalesce to form reticulated or other irregular figures with scalloped margins; the outline of the depigmented areas is always convex. Their color is about that of the skin of a person of very fair complexion. In such a patient, in fact, the disease may be scarcely noticeable except on the exposed surfaces in the summer time when the sun has caused increased pigmentation of the normal skin, while in dark individuals and especially in negroes the disfigurement is very striking. The pale patches are usually rendered more conspicuous by a hyperpigmentation of the bordering integument, which may assume a shade varying from light fawn in blonds, even to chocolate in those of naturally dark complexion. The hairs in an affected region may retain their color, though as a rule they too become white. The loss of pigment occurs on any part of the body but starts most fre-

quently perhaps upon the backs of the hands, trunk and face. The disease begins usually between the tenth and thirtieth years and develops very slowly. Its progress may become temporarily or permanently arrested at any stage. In a few instances the entire skin has become blanched. Exceptionally rarely is the pigment regained in an area in which it has once been lost. There are no other manifest changes in the skin, either in its texture, function or sensation. **DIAGNOSIS:** In *chloasma* the pigmented area develops in a skin of normal color and its border is usually ill defined, or if sharp is seldom concave. In *pityriasis versicolor* likewise the brownish spots appear upon a normal skin and it is the darker patches which spread with the convex edge; moreover, the pigmented areas are slightly furfuraceous and a microscopic examination of the tiny scales reveals the presence of the microsporon furfur. The leucodermic patches of *leprosy* are anaesthetic. **TREATMENT:** There is no curative treatment. White spots on exposed surfaces may be masked by staining them with walnut juice.