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Sulphuric Ether as “Salvation Oil”: A 2% Solution “In Place of a Physician”



With labels in English and German, a 2% solution of “SULPH[uric] ETHER” was peddled to rural American families as “Salvation Oil.” Used as an external liniment, this panacea was truly a family affair—it could be applied or rubbed onto the skin of family members or onto the hide of horses, cattle, or other family livestock. In December of 1898, Nebraska’s *Cherry County Independent* newspaper advertised the use of “Salvation Oil for what it is recommended in place of a physician. It never fails.” (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists, Inc.)

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