**1778. FEB. 16. Head Quarters, Valley Forge. To George Clinton, Governor of New York,**27 **on the dire need for meat and other provisions for Washington’s troops.**

It is with great reluctance I trouble you on a subject which does not properly fall within your province [as governor], but it is a subject that occasions me more distress than I have felt since the commencement of the war, and which loudly demands the most zealous exertions of every person of weight and authority who is interested in the success of our affairs — I mean the present dreadful situation of the army for want of provisions and the miserable prospects before us with respect to futurity. It is more alarming than you will probably conceive, for to form a just idea it were necessary to be on the spot. For some days past, there has been little less than a famine in camp. A part of the army has been a week without any kind of flesh & the rest three or four days. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiery that they have not been, ere [before] this excited by their sufferings to a general mutiny and dispersion. Strong symptoms however of discontent have appeared in particular instances, and nothing but the most active effort everywhere can long avert so shocking a catastrophe.

. . . I am calling upon all those whose stations and influence enable them to contribute their aid upon so important an occasion, and from your well known zeal, I expect everything within the compass of your power and that the abilities and resources of the state over which you preside will admit. . . What methods you can take, you will be the best judge of, but if you can devise any means to procure a quantity of cattle or other kind of flesh for the use of this army, to