and which I do not doubt has already presented itself to your Lordship's prudence.

The administration is thunderstruck, more even at what has happened at New York, where on the news of the success the mob seized, unloaded and destroyed the cargoes of two ships bound with provisions for Boston,[2] than at Gage's[3] miscarriage.[4] The town imputes to them thoughts of making some changes:[5] I do not believe they have any such thoughts *yet*—but they will have, my Lord, if misfortunes come thick—and if they do, the several factions in the ministry will certainly look then, as they already have begun to do, for various protection. The *Cabal's*[6] first thought will be double; to get assistance, and to disunite those who would give it: in the first place, not to leave the Opposition strong; and in the second, that the parts that are meant to be *always* constituent, may have farther resources to try. This game has been played so often, it can dupe nobody. Indeed it has rendered opposition so small, that very small bodies must be called in, if subdivisions are again to be tried. The trial would in truth answer ill: a civil war, so extensive in its consequences, cannot be supported, palliated, indemnified, if the present administration cannot support it itself, by a trifling accession of strength. The acceders might lessen the odium of the ministers, but only by incurring it themselves, and then be swept away with the guilty mass.

In my own opinion, my Lord, I speak it with great submission,

2. 'The news of the attack at Boston reached New York on Sunday the 23d [of April], and that very day the populace seized the city arms, and unloaded two provision vessels bound for the troops at Boston' (*Daily Adv.* 17 June, *sub* New York, 1 May). 'Two ships laden with provisions for him [Gage] have been destroyed at New York' (HW to Mason 12 June 1775, MASON i. 206). See also MANN viii. 111 and n. 13; *Last Journals* i. 465.

3. Hon. Thomas Gage (1719 or 1720–87), Lt.-Gen., 1770; acting commander-in-chief in North America Nov. 1763–June 1773, May 1774–Oct. 1775; governor of Massachusetts Bay 1774–5 (J. R. Alden, *General Gage in America,* Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1948, pp. 61, 192–3, 202–4, 283).

4. At Concord and in the ensuing battle at Lexington. 'General Gage had sent a party to seize a magazine belonging to the provincials at Concord, which was guarded by militia of the province in arms. The regulars, about 1000, attacked the provincials, not half so many, who repulsed them, and the latter retired to Lexington. Gage sent another party under Lord Percy to support the former; he, finding himself likely to be attacked, sent for fresh orders, which were to retreat to Boston. The country came in to support the provincials, who lost about 50 men, and the regulars 150. . . .Thus was the civil war begun, and a victory the first fruits of it on the side of the Americans' (*Last Journals* i. 463–4).

5. HW wrote Mason 12 June: 'The City says there must be a pacification [in America] and a change of actors. Much good may it do those who will read their parts! Old *Garrick* [Lord Chatham] perhaps will return to the stage' (MASON i. 206). 'It was yesterday reported, that a change in the administration will soon take place' (*Daily Adv.* 20 June).

6. 'The secret cabal at Court' (*Mem. Geo. III* iii. 24 n. 1).