Tony and Hastings
HASTINGS. My honest 'squire! I now find you a man of your word.
This looks like friendship.

TONY. Ay, I'm your friend, and the best friend you have in the world,
if you knew but all. This riding by night, by the bye, is cursedly
tiresome. It has shook me worse than the basket of a stage-coach.

HASTINGS. But how? where did you leave your fellow-travellers? Are
they in safety? Are they housed?

TONY. Five and twenty miles in two hours and a half is no such bad
driving. The poor beasts have smoked for it: rabbit me, but I'd rather
ride forty miles after a fox than ten with such varment.

HASTINGS. Well, but where have you left the ladies? I die with
impatience.

TONY. Left them! Why where should I leave them but where I found
them?

HASTINGS. This is a riddle.

TONY. Riddle me this then. What's that goes round the house, and
round the house, and never touches the house?

HASTINGS. I'm still astray.

TONY. Why, that's it, mon. I have led them astray. By jingo,
there's not a pond or a slough within five miles of the place but they
can tell the taste of.

HASTINGS. Ha! ha! ha! I understand: you took them in a round, while
they supposed themselves going forward, and so you have at last brought
them home again.

TONY. You shall hear. I first took them down Feather-bed Lane, where
we stuck fast in the mud. I then rattled them crack over the stones of
Up-and-down Hill. I then introduced them to the gibbet on Heavy-tree
Heath; and from that, with a circumbendibus, I fairly lodged them in
the horse-pond at the bottom of the garden.

HASTINGS. But no accident, I hope?

TONY. No, no. Only mother is confoundedly frightened. She thinks
herself forty miles off. She's sick of the journey; and the cattle can
scarce crawl. So if your own horses be ready, you may whip off with
cousin, and I'll be bound that no soul here can budge a foot to follow
you.

HASTINGS. My dear friend, how can I be grateful?

TONY. Ay, now it's dear friend, noble 'squire. Just now, it was all
idiot, cub, and run me through the guts. Damn YOUR way of fighting, I
say. After we take a knock in this part of the country, we kiss and be
friends. But if you had run me through the guts, then I should be
dead, and you might go kiss the hangman.

HASTINGS. The rebuke is just. But I must hasten to relieve Miss
Neville: if you keep the old lady employed, I promise to take care of
the young one. [Exit HASTINGS.]

TONY. Never fear me. Here she comes. Vanish. She's got from the
pond, and draggled up to the waist like a mermaid.