

"You hain't been home since the mornin'—not since you *hooked it away*?" Jerry's voice was tremulous with excitement as he asked the question.

"No, I've been away all day."—*The Little Ragamuffins*.

It has been suggested that it is derived from the gypsy *hokka* or *hekka*, hurry away, hasten.

Hook, on one's own (common), on one's own account or responsibility.

The tale runs that a scientific gentleman has been examining his wife's out-door jacket after each excursion, and has carefully collected every loose hair which he has found thereon.—*Society*.

Dependent for a living on one's own resources or exertions. Originally American.

Supplied me with physic whenever I wanted it, and accustomed me to a life of organised laziness—and yet at the end of this time they turn me out to get my living *on my own hook*.—*Evening News*.

What, loose several days in London—*on your own hook* and free to wander, and with no one to purtect you?—*J. Greenwood: Dick Temple*.

Possibly from the thieves' phrase to *hook*, to steal, thieving and getting a living being with them synonymous; or from *hook*, a catch, so that *on one's own hook* would mean literally, living on what I catch. It may also be derived from an allusion to a meat hook, metaphorically meaning larder, store. French authors have certainly used it with that signification, and the French have the expression

(not slang) "*avoir à son croc*," to have in store; "*vivre aux crochets de quelqu'un*," to be dependent on another for one's living, to live at his expense, and the obsolete "*diner sur ses crochets*," to pay for one's own dinner.

Again, it has been suggested that *on one's own hook* is from a metaphor drawn from the practice of the fish-curers on the Eastern coasts, who hang up the herrings and haddocks to dry in the sun.

Hookem snivey, an impostor who feigns sickness, disease, or calamity, and exhibits his miseries in the streets to excite pity and charity. From *to hook*, and *snivelling*, or possibly from the gypsy *hookaben*, a cheat.

Hooks (thieves), fingers. Termed also "forks."

With his smeller a trumpet blowing,
A regular swell cove lushy lay,
To his clies my *hooks* I throw in,
Tol, lol, &c.,

And collar his dragons clear away.
—*W. Maginn: Vidocq's Siang Song*.

(Common), "gone off the *hooks*," dead.

Death wandered by the sea,
And struck by Walton's looks,
Broke Isaac's line of life
And took him "off the *hooks*."
—*Punch*.

An allusion to a gate off its hinges. Compare with the old English phrase, "to be off the