

Key Citations On Courage

Post by “Cassius” of October 4, 2023 at 12:10 PM

Diogenes Laertius X - 122: They hold that ... courage does not come by nature, but by a calculation of advantage.

Epicurus to Herotodus 83: Here, Herodotus, is my treatise on the chief points concerning the nature of the general principles, abridged so that my account would be easy to grasp with accuracy. I think that, even if one were unable to proceed to all the detailed particulars of the system, he would from this obtain **an unrivaled strength compared with other men**. For indeed he will clear up for himself many of the detailed points by reference to our general system, and these very principles, if he stores them in his mind, will constantly aid him. For such is their character that even those who are at present engaged in working out the details to a considerable degree, or even completely, will be able to carry out the greater part of their investigations into the nature of the whole by conducting their analysis in reference to such a survey as this. And as for all who are not fully among those on the way to being perfected, some of them can from this summary obtain a hasty view of the most important matters without oral instruction so as to secure peace of mind.

Cicero's Torquatus in On Ends Book 1 - XV: The same principle will be found to hold good with respect to courage. For the discharge of labours and the endurance of pain are neither of them intrinsically tempting; nor is patience, nor diligence, nor watchfulness, nor industry which is so much extolled, nor even courage itself: but we cultivate these habits in order that we may live without care and fear, and may be able, as far as is in our power, to release our minds and bodies from annoyance. For as the whole condition of tranquil life is thrown into confusion by the fear of death, and as it is a miserable thing to yield to pain and to bear it with a humble and imbecile mind; and as on account of that weakness of mind many men have ruined their parents, many men their friends, some their country, and very many indeed have utterly undone themselves; so a vigorous and lofty mind is free from all care and pain, since it despises death, which only places those who encounter it in [pg 116] the same condition as that in which they were before they were born; and it is so prepared for pain that it recollects that the very greatest are terminated by death, and that slight pains have many intervals of rest, and that we can master moderate ones, so as to bear them if they are tolerable, and if not, we can depart with equanimity out of life, just as out of a theatre, when it no longer pleases us. By all which considerations it is understood that cowardice and idleness are not blamed, and that courage and patience are not praised, for their own sakes; but that the one line of conduct is rejected as the parent of pain, and the other desired as the author of pleasure.