

The Definitive "Chrysippus' Hand Argument" Thread

Post by "Cassius" of April 20, 2023 at 6:24 AM

Reference to Chrysippus vs Epicurus in writing, and to the statue in the Ceramicus - plus the meaning of Chrysippus' name! (as Don points out below - a pun!)

III. He was industrious beyond all other men; as is plain from his writings; for he wrote more than seven hundred and five books. And he often wrote several books on the same subject, wishing to put down everything that occurred to him; and constantly correcting his previous assertions, and using a great abundance of testimonies. So that, as in one of his writings he had quoted very nearly the whole of the Medea of Euripides, and some one had his book in his hands; this latter, when he was asked what he had got there, made answer, "The Medea of Chrysippus." And Apollodorus, the Athenian, in his Collection of Dogmas, wishing to assert that what Epicurus had written out of his own head, and without any quotations to support his arguments, was a great deal more than all the books of Chrysippus, speaks thus (I give his exact words), "For if any one were to take away from the books of Chrysippus all the passages which he quotes from other authors, his paper would be left empty."

These are the words of Apollodorus; but the old woman who lived with him, as Diocles reports, used to say that he wrote five hundred lines every day. And Hecaton says, that he first applied himself to philosophy, when his patrimony had been confiscated, and seized for the royal treasury.

IV. He was slight in person, as is plain from his statue which is in the Ceramicus, which is nearly hidden by the equestrian statue near it; in reference to which circumstance, Carneades called him Chrysippus.^[102] He was once reproached by some one for not attending the lectures of Ariston, who was drawing a great crowd after him at the time; and he replied, "If I had attended to the multitude I should not have been a philosopher." And once, when he saw a dialectician pressing hard on Cleanthes, and proposing sophistical fallacies to him, he said, "Cease to drag that old man from more important business, and propose these questions to us who are young." At another time, when some one wishing to ask him something privately, was addressing him quietly, but when he saw a multitude approaching began to speak more energetically he said to him:—

Alas, my brother! now your eye is troubled;
You were quite sane just now; and yet how quickly
Have you succumbed to frenzy!^[103]

[102] From κρύπτω, to hide, and ἵππος, a horse.