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Caryl Chessman and Quick Justice

IT IS SAID that in ancient Greece a man burned a public building and was put to death for it, preferring to be remembered infamously rather than not at all.

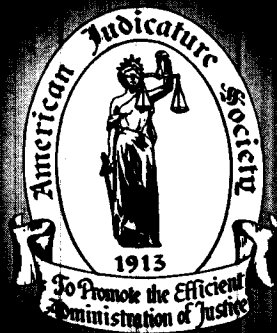
Caryl Chessman is now gone, and it seems that he, too, has achieved a kind of dubious immortality. Possibly no other individual in America has had his personal problems engage the attention of the Supreme Court of the United States so many times. Like William Marbury, an obscure District of Columbia justice of the peace, and Dred Scott, a Missouri slave, Caryl Chessman's name is engraved in the legal history of America, if nowhere else.

Already he is responsible for some hundreds of pages in the California and federal reports, and the law review and other collateral discussions of the case are just beginning. Edmond J. Clinton's article in this issue is part of it, and so is the excellent summary and analysis of it which appears in the April, 1960, Minnesota Law Review. There will be many more.

We do not have the answers to all of Mr. Clinton's troublesome and searching questions, but we do have some observations to make on the case in the light of today's judicial reform movement.

One important fact which had a great deal to do with prolonging the litigation was the death of the court reporter before his highly personalized

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