

AFTER MANY YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT...

PRELIMINARIES for the 1966 Steelband Festival began at Queens Hall on Thursday. The competition, among some 70 bands, for the coveted Prime Minister's Trophy, now held by Esso Tripoli of St. James.

Now the most remarkable step by pan



ELLIE MANNETTE
... a pioneer

This year's festival is remarkable because Professor John Russell, of Music Festival fame, is the adjudicator. This is the first time competing steelbands will be judged by a foreign-based person and one as expert in the field of music as Professor Russell.

The Association decided to get a foreign adjudicator after some of their member bands expressed dissatisfaction over the adjudicating at past festivals.

Expert adjudicating is desirable and the Steelband Association is to be commended on trying to secure the best.

It is to be hoped they have not reached too far out on a limb financially to secure such expert and necessarily costly service, and put their slender finances in jeopardy. So far the year has been a great one for pan. The Gay Desperadoes were sent officially to Dakar as part of the country's team to the Festival of Negro Arts.

Pan has come to church since several young

priests asked bands in to play sacred music during services. And now Professor Russell is here to adjudicate.

Great pan captains, tuners and arrangers must be impatient to lay their wares out for the professor. Men like Tony Williams, Ellie Mannette, Rudolph Charles and Lennox Mohammed have for years disdained to be mere Calypso musicians. They have sweated at new ways to tune pans to pro-

duce almost as wide a range of notes as the piano. They have laboured to arrange music for their "orchestras."

They have coaxed and cajoled and commanded their men to their present excellence.

The best bands have taken Trinidad music up and down the Caribbean, to Latin America, United States, Canada and Britain. They have been some of the country's most excellent ambassadors and have provided the lure, especially at Carnival for thousands of tourists.

Recognition by the church and sponsorship by some of the best business houses and banks have done much to raise the bands to eminence. But the recognition and sponsorship came from the growth of their



● **SOLO HARMONITES** on stage Thursday night.

music and from the improved conduct and bearing of the bandsmen.

The Government's attitude, especially that of the Prime Minister, has also helped the panmen immensely.

They have also, by their own excellence, at Carnival, Festival, jamboree and concert, created immense popular support.