

A Steelband Breaks Taboo

UN T I L recently, delving into the intricacies and inconsistencies of historical records for the purposes of masqueraders had apparently been something close to taboo for steelbands.

It is no longer so. This year, one of Port-of-Spain's leading bands is making a clean break from the realm of the fancy sailor and marching boldly into the kingdom of Saldenha, Lovelace, Bailey and the others.

And the man behind the move is enterprising, business-like Clyde Dash of the Starlift Steelband.

Strangely enough, for the flashy Mr. Dash, the pre-carnival set-up with Starlift is not the imposing, awe-inspiring spectacle found with the "Big

Boys." There is an aura of peaceful and quiet innocence in the Starlift camp: of blissful ignorance that Carnival is less than two months away.

This, of course, is completely untrue. The behind-the-scenes hustle is there. Three focal points in the business: Borde Street, Port-of-Spain; Hunter Street, Woodbrook; and De Verteuil where the band has some of the pans.

Because, unlike the "Big Boys," this is a double job for Starlift. The band's reputation for good road mu-

Carnival Bands No. 2

By
News Staff Writer

sic at Carnival has to be kept up. There are tunes to be arranged and learned, pans to be tuned and painted. And all must be ready **ON TIME**.

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NEWSMAN BY STAFF WRITER

The setting is somewhere near Mount Olympus in Greece. The times? See Homer. The subjects? "The Eminence of Aphrodite" something in the Labyrinth pattern. Starlift has gone way back past the history books into the mythical world of the Greeks, to the home of the gods and goddesses whose every whim was iron-fisted law.

TOUGH WORK

And the work is tough, tougher than most because Dash is still paying house-to-house calls on prospective members armed with a batch of coloured drawings; explaining, quoting prices, telling the whys and wherefores of it all.

Helping with the moulding; getting prices of material; co-ordinating the million and one pieces into that has to become the



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gigantic whole at Carnival. And all this has to be done outside of hours when he works as a civil servant at Trinidad's hot spot—the Port-of-Spain wharves.

However, Dash reports that he is having great co-operation from Carl Goodard in rounding up prospective members. Dash figures that the entire band will cost about \$6,000.

Not that there is the slightest bit of doubt that all will turn out well in the

end. Starlift has, over the past few years, acquired a high reputation as a crowd pleaser. From present indications, this trend will continue more strongly than ever.

Dash is hesitant about committing himself on entry in the "Band of the Year" race. Understandably too, since, even with Carnival, discretion remains the better part of valour.

The fact remains, how-

ever, that older heads in the business could never expect to keep on getting all the kudos while there are young, intelligent, ambitious and enterprising younger 'uns around the place.

Another big secret: Who is Aphrodite. Decidedly, the noble lady is already picked. But they just are not giving. Why? Elementary, dear Watson. Casting for a band is an important in these times of technical mat' as it is for a play on Broadway.

As Starlift's...
When the time comes, we will see!

