

Steelband Music Said Biggest Contribution To Art This Century

Trinidad has made one of the greatest contributions to the realm of art in this century, stated Mr. Rudolph Dunbar, famous symphony orchestra conductor, in a Press Conference at the Queen's Park Hotel yesterday. At the time Mr. Dunbar was commenting on the steelband.

He said he had the privilege to listen to TASPO rehearsing in Martinique on his way to Trinidad, and it was "interesting to witness how the lads were beating out the most complex rhythms with dexterity". A surprising element of the band was the profound and soothing resonance from the "steel tympanies", and the lads that were playing them were reading music.

"The steelband," he said, "is different in every respect, for aside from their playing ability, they presented the rustic simplicity which would be a show-piece for European audiences. You can take it from me, the steel band is here to stay."

The boys, he said, who are now on their way to the Festival of Britain, will be successful in England, and "when they go to Paris, they are going to literally eat them up".

New Form Of Life

The only thing he feared of TASPO was that they might lose their heads as a large number of coloured people do when they suddenly came into prominence. So impressed he was with TASPO, he continued, that he had since sent a cablegram to London to the proprietors of the Calypso Club—the newest and most up-to-date in London—to book up a steelband outfit. He said that during his stay here, he would be listening to the various steelbands with the view of choosing one to send on this assignment.

Mr. Dunbar said while he was

in London he had heard about the steelband, but the first time he heard them play was in Martinique.

Asked to explain his comment as to the possibility of TASPO "losing their heads", Mr. Dunbar had it to say that it was natural among coloured people, especially those with little education, to get that way when pitchforked in a new form of life.

Mr. Dunbar, who is accompanied by his manager, Mr. Angus Kennedy, came to Trinidad on Thursday by the Colombie. He is on a 12-month tour of the West Indies and Latin American countries, and will also visit Lisbon and Spain. He expects to be in Trinidad for the next seven days, after which he will proceed straight to British Guiana—his homeland—where, it is understood, he would be given a big "welcome home".

Mr. Dunbar, who is 41 years old, has not been back to B.G. since he left there at the age of nine. During the 32 years Mr. Dunbar has stayed away from home, he blossomed into a master clarinetist. He has the distinction of leading celebrated symphony orchestras of the world.

AFTERNOON SHOWERS

It will be cloudy improving during the morning, but there will be more showers during the late morning and afternoon.