

130 DAYS IN GILLINGHAM

TVS the new Independent Television Company covering the South and South East have broken all records with the construction of their new TV studio at Gillingham. The studio is a conversion of a former cinema and this is an account of the 130 days from purchase of the property to the first production on 16th December '81. The work was carried out simultaneously with planning of the new three studio Television complex at Maidstone, Kent.

After the award by the IBA of the Television franchise for the South and South East it was planned to have studios working in both areas by January 1st 1982. The Northam

studios in Southampton were already operating but the planned complex in Maidstone would not be available till later in 1982. Therefore suitable premises for a temporary studio were sought to establish the new company's presence in the area.

The search for suitable premises was exhaustive and involved a number of detailed studies of available cinemas, churches and warehouses but in most cases the amount of work necessary to perform a satisfactory conversion was out of all proportion to the actual benefit TVS felt they would get out of such a temporary situation.

Finally the Plaza Cinema in Gillingham which had been rejected in the



GAIETY THEATRE, DOUGLAS

THIS magnificent shot which captures all the atmosphere of what a traditional theatre should be was taken by Victor Glasstone of the Gaiety Theatre at Douglas, Isle of Man. The photo is from the travelling exhibition "Curtains!!! Or a New Life for Old Theatres" which opened at the Museum of London on 5th March, and which will in May go on tour around the U.K. for two years. Scotland will be the starting point.

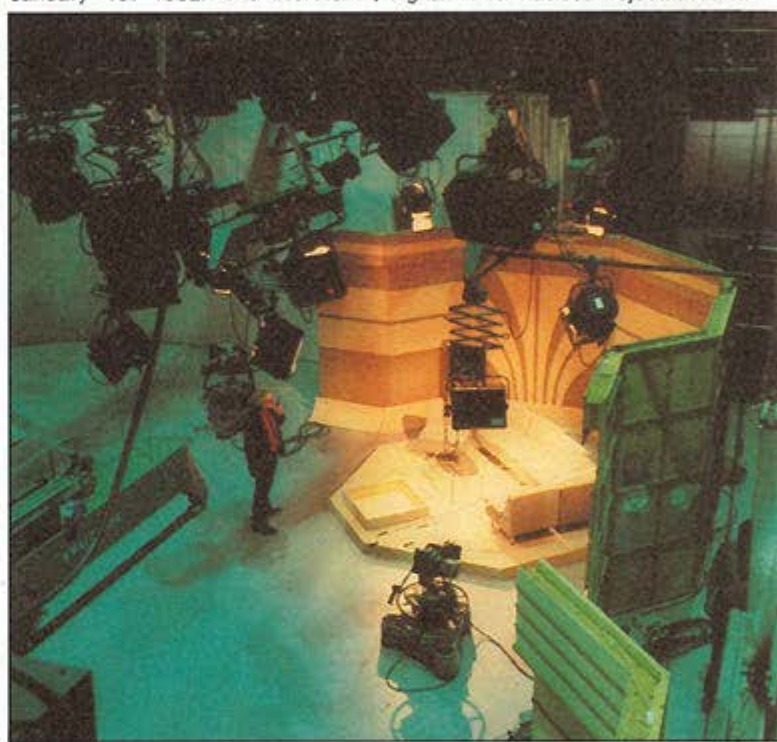
The Exhibition has been put together with the help of many enthusiasts throughout the country and a committee consisting of Christopher Brereton, David Cheshire, John Earl, Victor Glasstone, Iain Mackintosh, Michael Sell.

Both the exhibition and the book of the same title will, incidentally, be fully covered in our next issue.

The Gaiety Theatre is owned by the Isle of Man Government and the restoration scheme was carried out by the Isle of Man Architect's Department under the direction of Victor Glasstone, the Consultant.

Rank Strand supplied the lighting, the stage and auditorium drapes and the restored seating, work being only recently completed.

The photo shows the marvellous effect which sympathetic restoration, the right technical equipment plus an originally fine building can achieve. ■



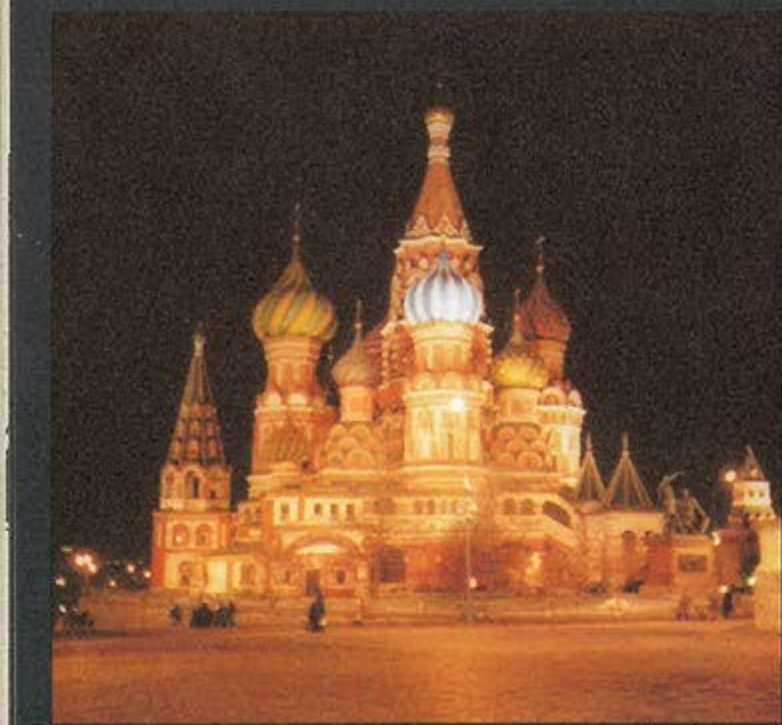
RETREAT TO MOSCOW

by The Editor

AS UK readers will remember only too well December brought us most unseasonal weather. In place of mild damp fogs and slush there were blizzards, deep snow. Temperatures of 10 degrees Farenheit were noted on the thermometer outside the editorial greenhouse. In the face of such weather there is only one answer — go somewhere milder. This David Hannay and Alan Luxford of the Strand Export department did, by arranging to retreat as quickly as possible to the comparative warmth of Moscow (no kidding, folks, they both assured me it was considerably warmer than at home!).

Fortunately an invitation to exhibit our theatre lighting equipment had been made through the good office of the Department of Science and the Ministry of Culture and an array of lanterns, Tempus desks and a Galaxy memory system, were all duly set up in the Lenin Komsomol Theatre.

Although the exhibition only lasted for four days several hundred visitors came from Moscow itself, Leningrad, Kiev, and a good many other places in that vast country. Our twosome would



The Mchat Theatre