

Stella not to be

COS 417/108.21
Feb 17th 1909

"The Vatican Reading Room"

from W.P. orate book.

Rome

Rev? If m.
 Mr. ^{on old catalogues musical things} ~~Bannister~~ or ^{for the keys to the shelves in the Vatican} ~~or~~ ^{then consistently} ~~was~~ ^{was} ~~him~~, Mr. ^{in the Bodleian during the war.} ~~B. ...~~
 Rome.
 S.P.O.

(Write Bannister - who the
 showed up the Vatican?
 return the answer?)

"It was opened under the auspices of Leo XII in 1885 and is used only for MS. It is a room about 70 by 80 ft. with four windows opening on to ^{one} of the courts. At one side between the central windows Padre Elisle? has his desk. At a special desk at end of room are places for members of the Vatican with easy chairs. There are only four readers' tables with places for about ten readers. The walls are covered with pictures of the old Cardinal Librarians. The MSS. are very accessible. There are full catalogues and it takes only 15-20 mins. to get any special vol. The rooms are only open from 8.30 - 12 daily. There are more ecclesiastic than lay readers. Next to me was an ancient Padre with a long grey beard and flowing hair which reached to his shoulders. He was working at great MSS. and about every 5 mins. stimulated his gray cortex with a big pinch of snuff. Opposite sat a monk in brown and a young Englishman. The room is warm but had also the odour of unwashed humanity to a marked degree, that smell of clothes soaked in sweat. Even at 9.45 on entering the room it was evident, and it became intensified as the morning wore on. The -"

Abrupt end