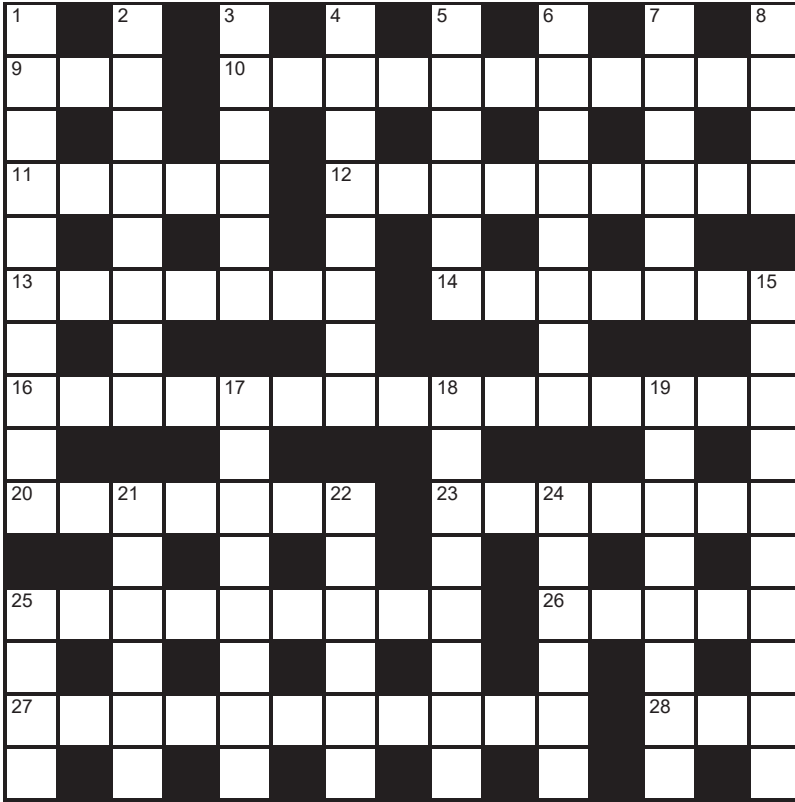


CROSSWORD

No 16,618 Set by FALCON



ACROSS

- 9 Close finish (3)
- 10 Strengthen vulnerable citadel soon (11)
- 11 Examine front of pretty gown (5)
- 12 Offhand, hob perhaps unrealistic (4-5)
- 13 Cockney's safe's wide open (7)
- 14 Longed for, tranquillity, ultimately gained (7)
- 16 Novel published again meets standards (3,3,4,5)
- 20 Resilient European to remain in charge (7)
- 23 Pole on motorway makes error (7)
- 25 Time to study factory's routine drudgery (9)
- 26 Perfect vision learner driver shows (5)
- 27 Hide a catlike animal in house (11)
- 28 Not entirely small element (3)

DOWN

- 1 Band's record – piano included in rearranged prelude (4,6)
- 2 Mostly recommend imbibing a liqueur (8)
- 3 Second best comedian (6)
- 4 Manned it at sea, together (2,6)
- 5 Novel cocktail (3,3)
- 6 Frantic friar employing force against very loud undesirables (4-4)
- 7 Budget speech lacking nothing (6)
- 8 Jolly place to eat, no car required (4)
- 15 Send in lady to reform theme park (10)
- 17 Contemporary, a top duet dancing (2-2-4)
- 18 Rex walking leisurely, hiking (8)
- 19 A horse taken initially inside to drink (8)
- 21 Guitarist, celebrity, coming over after a kiss (6)
- 22 Group in church squirm (6)
- 24 Mum, enthusiastic about religion (6)
- 25 Printer's error in charity poster (4)

JOTTER PAD

Solution 16,617

