CROSSWORD
No 17,544 Set by JULIUS

ACROSS
1 Italian probes AAA giant PLCs hit by revenue charge (7,5,3)
9 Defame Fern after changing sides (7)
10 Stop Iran harbour catching fish (7)
11 Planet core hot to the east (5)
12 A red deer going out around noon hit from behind by a car (4-5)
13 Look carefully at opener for Lord's Test series — they might bat (9)
15 Pessimist starts to cancel yearly National Insurance contributions (5)
16 Brilliance of chapter in revolutionary tale (5)
18 Halfway through some basic maths, by the sea in France when it's hot? (9)
20 Like orbiting fashionable society groups? (2,7)
23 Tube accepts American money (5)
24 Lobbying corruptly to have a bishop sacked in an ungentlemanly way (7)
25 Educator sadly leaves university design movement (3,4)
26 With which those hoping to kick the habit get plastered? (8,7)

DOWN
1 Which might show live celebs at No1 behaving badly? (5,10)
2 Runs into couple that is plain (7)
3 Gain courage from the karate chop? (4,5)
4 Solitary character extended golf breaks (5)
5 Rated dad getting up changing diapers (9)
6 Spanish chap cycling from Scandinavia? (5)
7 Listening to radio song — terrible noise! (5,2)
8 They hang around the house until early January (4,11)
14 Hay animal chewed is from the highest mountains (9)
15 Caught up-to-date broadcast — it's a revolution! (4,5)
17 Secular Tory is boring, terse, to the point (7)
19 Scottish King introducing an honour to American subject (7)
21 Carry off old time machine (5)
22 Rascal removing tail from Dublin Bay prawns (5)