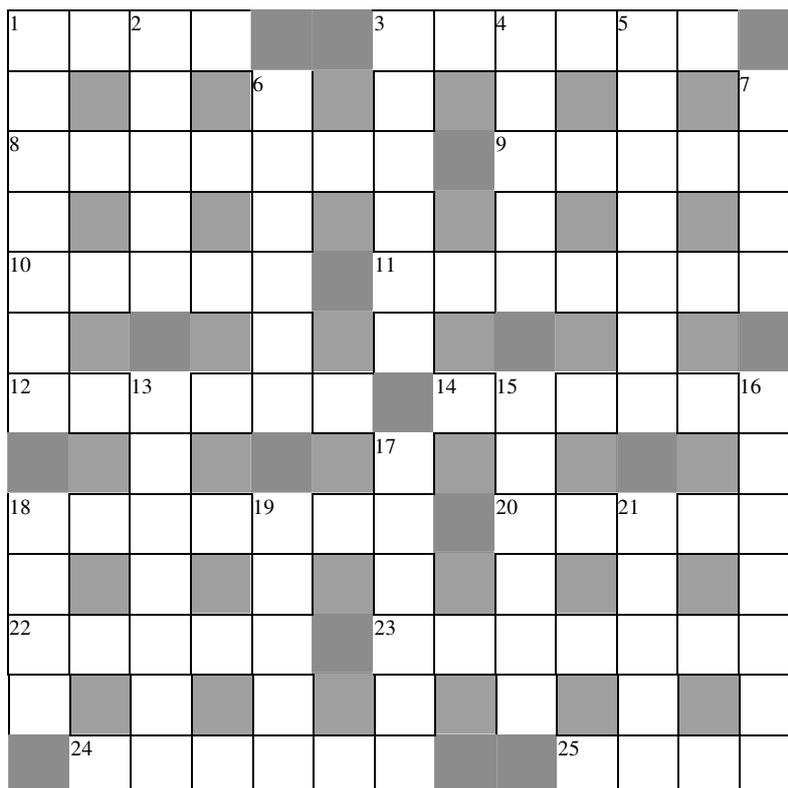


Crossword No. 278

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Across

1. It's miserly to have in mind only the average (which is a third) ... (4)
3. ... but foolish to rob any minor nobleman's dominion. (6)
8. An incidental benefit is ... to *make y a r n*? Rotten! (4-3)
9. The paddleboat axle's function, for example, is at the heart of the Mississippi vote. (5)
10. I can get lost in a new musical arrangement and find ecstasy in a bird's flight feather. (5)
11. Boiling sun in chaotic lair found on an island. (7)
12. Sheer extravagance — sounds like Mr Geller after first light on the Mons Palatinus. (6)
14. Is that ... over there possibly a ravine? (6)
18. *Vanellus*, with upper legs where tens are found. (7)
20. Boy! Before half of em's loaded! (5)
22. Scary shout near a small street gives you a nudge to go up there. (5)
23. After a month, in short, some guys have had time to grow a bit. (7)
24. Air outlet is behind billboard for something coming in December. (6)
25. A swim where almost half one's body fat is lost. (1,3)

Down

1. Strong, cold north-west wind — and there's thin fog above trains without one. (7)
2. Self-evident truth: dispense with American, then I get the Order of Merit. (5)
3. Box office, very loud, popular; but now ... Brian Cox, perhaps. (6)
4. Romania, Portugal, El Salvador: if you know these, you're OK on procedure (for travel to those places, anyway). (5)
5. Just type the first half, and place it under a book, and you'll get a nice new trinket. (7)
6. The weapon from two, used to murder someone doing a bit of weeding, and they just say he plays tricks? (6)
7. Mariner under the sun initially — and maybe Polaris at night. (4)
13. Grotesque disease I concealed — mark shaped like a sword. (7)
15. Claim everything: for example, energy. (6)
16. North, on to terminus, perhaps uninterrupted. (3-4)
17. Strange Zoroastrian hymns leave you struck with amazement and horror. (6)
18. Throw electronic brain division. (4)
19. Mexican plant fibre is the learning enterprise, at first. (5)
21. Five hundred studied some text in great fear. (5)