

ACROSS

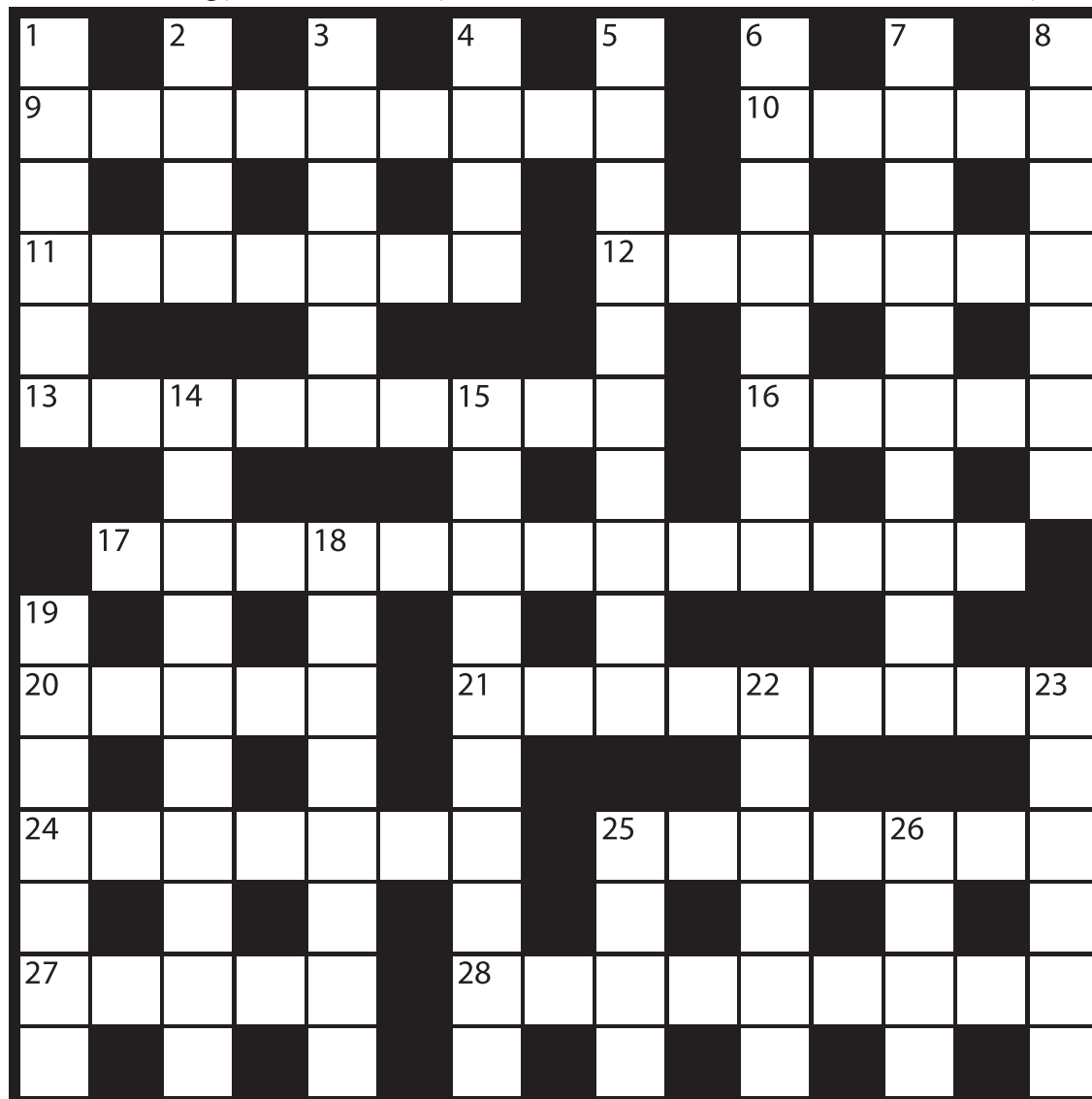
- 9 One's in an eastern country – an eastern republic (9)
 10 Almost submerged by a thin layer (5)
 11 Dried fruit for ruler's wife (7)
 12 Elite ref loses letter and turns productive (7)
 13 Relate to a forward in pain (9)
 16 Harmonised and in good shape (5)
 17 Most popular member of the company? (4,9)
 20 Hear Roman forty do really well (5)
 21 Dissenter's abnormal fatigue (9)
 24 Long letter in pile set out (7)
 25 Hesitate about set of steps free from germs (7)
 27 Rose makes this point (5)
 28 Once hurt badly by entrance to nearby club (9)

DOWN

- 1 Rest of Mediterraneans swap starter at party (6)
 2 False image sounds lazy (4)
 3 Not just brunette, perhaps? (6)
 4 China etc like Italy with autocratic leader (4)
 5 1800 seconds – ho! (4,2,4)
 6 Storyteller from isle up on hill (8)
 7 Terribly ornate item, one held up by strings (10)
 8 Hardest sort of yarns (7)
 14 Violent or piercing opera (6,4)
 15 Segregated people way back in flats (10)

Wednesday, 9th March, 2022

No. 15,867



- 18 Belligerent male holding large Titian composition (8)
 19 Below a Scottish mountain, hate develops (7)
 22 Some children, children thoroughly wet (6)
 23 Insane sort of colour (6)
 25 Filth employs a hundred in total (4)
 26 Back in annexe, bitten by goat (4)