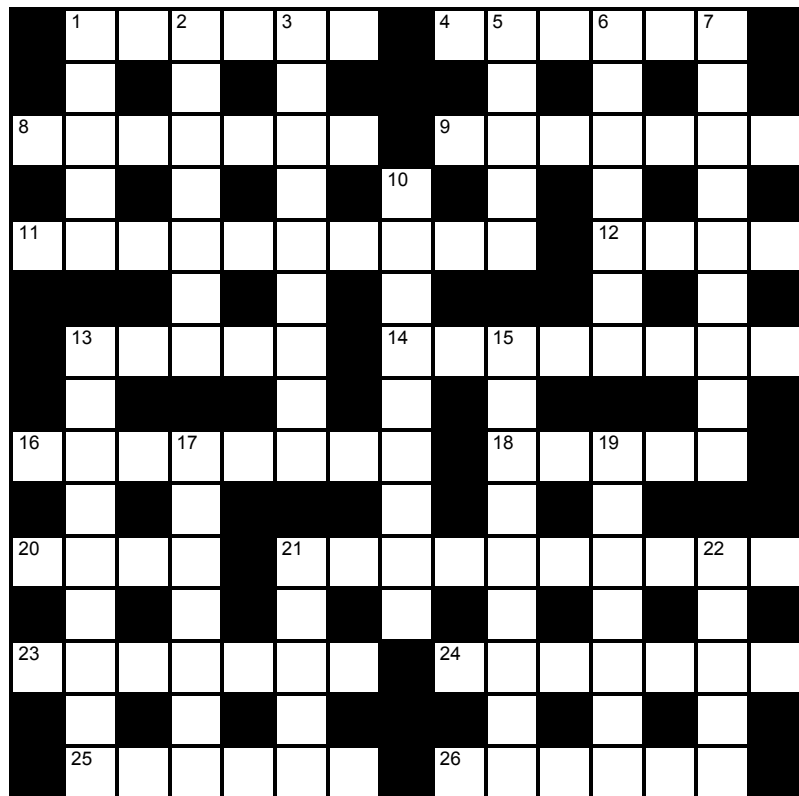


Rationalist, by Rupert

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Across

- 1** Strange being with no head is harmless (6)
4 See 1 Down
8 Crack force's leader is certain (7)
9 11 where 17 18 found his 13 with even edges (7)
11 Freethinker always supporting endless loop in college (10)
12 Heads of independent church organisations notice religious image (4)
13 See 17 18's evidence of design (5)
14 Feminine boy and his bottom are similar (8)
16 Pulls horse's head down into Spooner's untreated sewer (4,4)
18 See 17 Down
20 Club quiet with seconds to go before start of lunch (4)
21 Triceps shown off without exclamation in muscular circles (10)
23 11 sailor's tool found in turbulent Nile (7)
24 Topless actress gets callback from 11 (7)

- 25** When breakfast starters are swallowed, issue elevated quality of sound (6)
26 Drooping eyelid makes it awkward to spit (6)

Down

- 1/4** He controls his destiny! (5,6)
2 Beginning new climb (7)
3 Wrong paper goes up; we finish after he has his wages taken (9)
5 A love is sung. Doh! (1,4)
6 Home for workers 50-50 under heated opposition (7)
7 Puckish pursuit is poor choice for PM (3,6)
10 A bed covering retaining heat in snowfall (9)
13 Sported a worn, bent headdress (3,6)
15 Conditional damage around climbing exercise death (9)
17/18 Send back friend captured by cunning priest (7,5)
19 Post-apocalyptic settler (7)
21 Hears about what some do to sheep (5)
22 Waterfalls in Waiwera in summer (5)