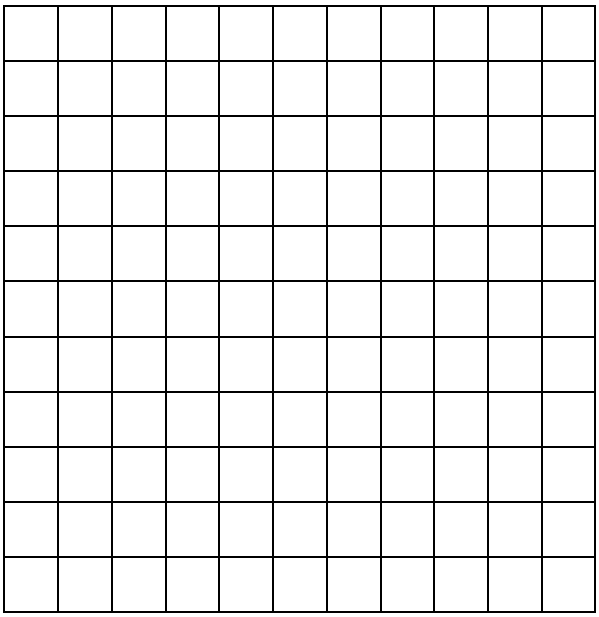
Puzzle # 129 – February 2012 "First Choice"

Instructions: Guess the words defined by the cryptic clues (answers vary in length from three to eleven letters; four are capitalized, one is foreign, and one is a three-word phrase) then enter them in the grid one after another in the same order as their clues, starting in the upper left corner. Across words that don't end at the right continue on the next row, and down words that don't end at the bottom continue in the next column. Nine across words and nine down words won't fit in the grid unless one of their letters is removed. Those eighteen letters, taken in order as they occur in across and down words, spell three words related to the mystery entries Thanks to Kevin Wald for test-solving and editing this puzzle.



Across

1. *Mystery entry*
2. A gale stirred up pond scum
3. At wit's end, dear Pete's going mad
4. Tips of cane added to actual grain
5. Set up in bustling Crete
6. Sweet fop loses head for Charlie
7. Guy let off to get covering
8. Pause has set railway back
9. Crowd contained by other deputies
10. Look of southern vetch
11. Romeo also returning for base part
12. Stupid Eloise has no love for cow
13. Railroad keeps up the French sovereign
14. Get to run with every one
15. Had a vision about the name of a cup, for instance
16. Mark and Earl love excessively
17. Genuine silver coin
18. Caterer gets fed
19. Ruminant of eastern territory
20. Present in the rectory
21. Dedicated plot of land in South Dakota
22. Observe bird taking left for right
23. No help analyzing chemical compound
24. Injured in France, Lee's on the mend
25. *Mystery entry*

Down

1. Mistakenly cleared to issue a statement
2. Temerity of rabbi in glee being made king
3. Count ended in error involving penny
4. Tip of skewering instrument is keen
5. Turn out consistently ahead of time
6. Walk stealthily with small loaf
7. The Iroquois embracing a scion
8. Eastern story raised cheer
9. Save broken container
10. Put flatfish in sound
11. River route has a train wreck
12. Treat by shaking or beating
13. Household's advantage
14. Assemble storage unit back in bed
15. Tree of greater age
16. Draw English sled
17. Sun's corona starts to act up, radiating emissions of luminous energy
18. Find out how to start living and make money
19. A bit of relish in beverage is not too much to bear
20. Watch initiation of development in germ
21. Author describes encompassing mob
22. Portion of kudos earned
23. Bore merited a correction
24. Stockings beginning to annoy prophet