ACROSS
1 Contribute usefully in literary heroine's part? (2,4,3)
6 Brandish one in joint (5)
9 Female spies receiving praise (7)
10 Absorb new gen supplied by Arctic explorer (7)
11 Measure head (5)
12 Unusually trite, fine Egyptian queen (9)
14 Lettuce's price cut (3)
15 Working not compulsory, saving a lot of time? (11)
17 Shooting party, provided in retreat, circles courtyard (6,5)
19 Cause harm to planet, endlessly (3)
20 After end of Lent, request church working party (4,5)
22 Mean man conserving energy (5)
24 One who has stopped working on Hebridean island (7)
26 Native of Nazareth, former PM, losing face? (7)
27 The old lady twice breaking into reform school she once attended? (4,5)

DOWN
1 Extremely debatable, my colour scheme (5)
2 Authoritative statements, so clear when translated (7)
3 Colour that is raised on blue quilt (9)
4 Egghead, having drinks with her, failing to get hard riddle (5-6)
5 Draw level, almost (3)
6 Bet earnings on first in race (5)
7 Feeling demonstrated by symbol Charlie left out (7)
8 Diane with actor Ben, one producing drink (9)
13 Fearful time in motion picture like *Towering Inferno* (7,4)
14 Ace fare it cooked? (9)
16 Bad taste shown during last month by old eccentric? (9)
18 This may be worn as a favour (7)
19 Actress having stitch in side, keeled over (3,4)
21 Earliest tree on street (5)
23 Earlier religious house, incomplete (5)
25 English artist's age (3)