

Letter in *The Daily Telegraph*

To like or not to like

Sir,

Philip Johnston complains that the Government tells us 'who to like and who not to'. Charles Dickens had it right in *The Life and Adventures of Martin Chuzzlewit*:

‘“Every man”, said Mr Pecksniff, “has a right, an undoubted right, (which I, for one, would not call in question for any earthly consideration: oh no!) to regulate his own proceedings by his own likings and dislikings, supposing they are not immoral and not irreligious.”’

Francis Bennion

Note Under the heading 'Pecksniffian advice' the following letter from Linda Hepburn appeared in *The Daily Telegraph* on the following day:

‘Charles Dickens’s Mr Pecksniff has an impressive line in wise words (Letters, November 23); however he is actually a repellent hypocrite. Shakespeare’s famous “To thine own self be true” speech is spoken by Polonius, a man who spies on his children and hides behind an arras to listen to a private conversation.

The best writers are complex.’

Linda Hepburn