for open hearings before programs receive White House blessing and are sent to the Congress.”

The ultimate test, they conclude, is whether we as a Nation can alter our traditional attitudes toward private property so that land will be used in the public interest, by the imposition of social sanctions, if necessary. On this the outlook “while dim, does not warrant pessimism.”

_E. H. Wiecking_


_MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN_ about and many programs have been aimed at stabilizing the incomes of farmers and attempting to assure them an equitable share of the national income. Here is a comparatively new approach to the problem. The author of this book concludes that the greatest opportunity for the American farmer is to perform some of the services now handled by the “middleman,” and thus retain for himself a part of the margin between the price paid for raw farm products and the price paid by the consumer. In the opening words “Vertical farm diversification is the handling of farm products by the producer for one or more steps beyond raw production. It may consist of transportation, packaging, processing, storing, or retailing by the individual farmer or by cooperating groups of farmers. It starts with the completion of production and may follow through to the final consumer.”

That it is not a new idea is evidenced by the many individuals and farmer cooperatives that have successfully taken advantage of some of these opportunities. What Howard Doane does is to dramatize these opportunities and to place them in a new setting. He presents many of his own ideas on how farmers might profitably expand into new lines of effort stemming directly from the production of the most profitable crop they can produce on their farms. In passing, he takes some verbal side-swipes at horizontal diversification—the handling of a variety of farm enterprises for the sake of spreading the risks of prices and weather.

The author has a long-standing reputation for imaginative thinking and development of new ideas for improvements in management and operation of farms. He here brings together many of these ideas, including ways of adapting industrial processes and techniques to the farm and the farm home. Suggestive of his originality in treatment are titles to two chapters: “The Kitchshop” and “The Farmfac.”

Many will argue that the proposals, in effect, deny the economies of specialization and division of labor. Others will maintain that most of the advantages of vertical diversification—because of volume of product or investment requirements—are beyond the abilities of individual farmers and must be handled on a cooperative basis. Advantages to the individual farmer depend entirely upon how effective and efficient the cooperative is in competition with private processors or distributors. The farmer may or may not improve his income. Despite all such questions, this book suggests many interesting possibilities and contains many worth-while ideas for the enterprising farmer. It no doubt will receive widespread attention and consideration.

_Carl P. Heisig_