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The Fountain of Privilege. Political Foundations of Markets in Old Regime France and England, by H. L. Root. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995. Pp. 295. \$45.00. An important work on comparative development that argues that eighteenth-century economic expansion had different political consequences in Britain and France because of the nature of social, economic, and political privilege: more confined in France than in Britain. Although committed to the rationalization of authority, Crown policies in France intensified government dependence on clique and family. The new elite of French bureaucrats was entangled in the clientele and patronage systems of the past. Instead of promoting national consensus, the political process in France intensified mistrust and hostility among conflicting groups. The institutions of absolutism did not meet the needs for personal identity, social welfare, and social advancement created by rapid economic development. Possibly Root fails sufficiently to integrate the detailed crisis of the fall of the Old Regime with his general model, but this is a significant and arresting volume.