

fourths of its earnings over five per cent. and one-eighth of the entire charge on discounts.

The discount rate, unlike Canadian Banks, *is alike to all.* In addition to the above conditions, and others too numerous to specify, it loans many million francs every year to farmers, through their agricultural societies, for purely agricultural purposes at *two per cent. per annum.* Is it any wonder that the farms of France are so productive, and that France is not alone the richest nation on earth, but the controller of the money markets of the world?

The Bank of France in no sense owns or controls the Government or people of France. The interest and well-doing of the people demands and receives from this great institution the first consideration. Hence French farming and manufacturing industries are amongst the most prosperous in the world. During the past thirteen years the rate of discount has only changed ten times *and has never exceeded four and a half per cent.*

Yet even the above conditions have not been considered sufficiently favorable to the State, for under the new law which came into effect on January 1st, 1912, the share of profits to the Government has been much increased and the Bank is obliged to lend to the Government, *free of interest, an additional one hundred million francs, and twenty million francs also free of interest or charge, in aid of new and desirable industries, as directed by the State.* Surely the Bank of France does not control the Government or the people of France.

THE BANKS OF ITALY, SICILY AND NAPLES.

The Banks of Italy, Sicily and Naples pay to the Government of Italy more than two and a half million dollars per annum as currency tax. *They are compelled to lend to the Government money, as required, at one and a half per cent. interest.* They pay to the Government *one-third of all profits from five to six per cent., and one-half of all above six per cent.* The Banks of Italy don't own the Government of Italy.