Recreational facilities vary from camp to camp. Those prisoners who are working in labour detachments often far removed from the camp proper have little time or energy for leisure activities. Those in permanent camps, who are not required to work, have time on their hands and them is to every kind of use.

Smoking must be permitted under the Geneva Convention, and cigarettes are freely sent from outside. The British Red Cross sends 50 cigarettes per man per week, but further contributions are encouraged. Next-of-kin and friends are allowed to send money to a number of authorized tobacco firms, and the cigarettes are despatched directly from the factory. This is to prevent corruption. The prisoners of war division of the Department of National War Services maintains a record of the cigarettes sent to each prisoner; and this record is constantly checked to see that no prisoner is forgotten. A prisoner who is receiving few or no cigarettes is listed with one of the voluntary Canadian organizations such as the Women's Canadian Club, the Tobacco League, the Prisoners of War Relatives Association. During 1943 more than 210,000,000 cigarettes were sent from Canada to prisoners of war.

The International Y.M.C.A. takes as its province the religious, recreational and education services. It has 60 neutral representatives visiting the camps. In 1944 it is receiving a grant of $100,000 as Canada's contribution to the work in the prison camps for British and Canadian prisoners. It sends sports equipment, games and reading matter through its office in Geneva.

Some of the sports which have been organized in various camps are football, swimming, cricket, volleyball, softball, basketball and skiing.

Many of the prisoners become interested in cooking and sewing, knitting, crocheting and embroidery. In one camp an exhibition with more than 1,000 entries attracted 4,000 visitors. There were tapestries, paintings, drawings, clever work, wood carving (including a scale fort and model of Mount Rushmore by one of the New Zealanders) a large couch cover knit from silk sweater and rock wool, a hassock cover and a small regimental badge carved from a piece of aluminum, complete in all details even to the battle honors.

Sports meets are frequently organized, with all types of running and jumping contests. Camp choirs, orchestras and dramatic groups are popular, and one camp put on a puppet-show. Debates are organized, and many of the camps have weekly or fortnightly movies.

At Christmas many of the prisoners do their best to decorate their camps with evergreens and decorations made from Red Cross tins and anything else they can pick up. They usually organize carol singing and some kind of a play or "show" for Christmas night.

Recreational equipment goes to the prisoners from many sources. The International Y.M.C.A. is the largest donor, but anyone may send games, music, books or sports goods to prisoners through certain stores which are given permits to send these goods. To facilitate censorship they must be new goods and carry no messages. Books may also be sent. Last year the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire bought more than 100,000 pocket-size books for distribution, and the Canadian Red Cross has sent more than $5,000 worth of recreational books.

The prisoners of war division of the Department of National War Services co-ordinates the activities of interested organizations outside the government. These include the Red Cross, the International Y.M.C.A., the Canadian Prisoners of War Relatives Association and service auxiliaries. The field of activity of these organizations is somewhat limited, as far as prisoners of war are concerned, by the Geneva convention, but whatever they are able to do they are doing.

Last year 14,000 "permit parcels" were handled by Canadian postal officers, of which 74 had to be returned.