



# The Truth About the Present High Cost of Shoes

We do not believe that the present prevailing high prices for shoes and leather are justified.

**BECAUSE—We do not consider that there is an actual shortage in this country of hides, leather and shoes. For,**

**First**, the statistics during the war invariably show that the weekly increase of the import of hides and skins has been greater than the increase of exports on leather and shoes. It is reported in the News Bureau at Boston that the United States Leather Company, the so-called sole leather trust, is reported as having only increased its exports 15%.

**Second**, every manufacturer has plenty of leather to take care of his immediate wants, and then some! We are of the opinion that the average manufacturer has, during the past six months, had more leather than has not been made into shoes than ever before in the history of their business, **at least our factories have.**

**Third**, every dealer has plenty of shoes. If you doubt our word, try and find a shoe store that is short of shoes. **They may be short of your style, but that is their fault in ordering.**

**BECAUSE—We believe that a large part of the high prices prevailing today are caused by inflation, and that the consumer is responsible for having so readily paid any price asked. For,**

**First**, look at the financial papers and note the profit of the large sole leather companies.

**Second**, ask your shoe dealer or any business acquaintance if prices have not been pyramided by every article having been sold on a percentage profit gain.

For example, if the dealer formerly paid \$2.25 for a shoe to sell at \$3.00, will he pay \$4.50 or \$5.25 for a shoe to sell at \$6.00? In other words, his gross profit on the \$3.00 shoe was 25%. That same per cent on a \$6.00 shoe would be \$1.50; therefore, is he demanding you to pay twice the gross profit in the purchase of one pair of shoes?

**Think this over!**

## OUR POLICY

We feel that the average buyer cannot afford to pay unreasonably high prices for his shoes, but has got to buy them rather close to old popular prices, of from three to four dollars, and as our factories had sufficient leather at low prices, we were able to maintain our old selling prices during the larger part of 1916.

*We felt it was better to develop our volume than to abuse our friends.*

That we were successful is shown by the figures representing our increase last year over the year previous of 103%. Our increase for January of this year over January last year was 161%, and for February of this year over February of last year 116%. We want you to appreciate that a large part of the expense in retailing shoes is a fixed charge, such as rent, light, advertising, insurance, etc. Therefore, this big increase in volume has allowed us to decrease our average gross profit and offset to you a large part of the advance in leather during 1917.

Another one of our policies which has helped us sell at remarkably low prices has been the fact that we would not be a party to inflation of leather values where possible to avoid it.

We, therefore, have not hesitated to substitute for leather in certain parts of the shoe when our experience has led us to believe that the substitution was as **good or better** than the leather replaced, and we are perfectly willing to absolutely guarantee that any substitution which we make will give as good or better service than the leather it replaces. Therefore, why allow prejudice to interfere with your taking advantage of the development of the times?

One illustration of this is our use of the Fibre Sole. This sole is a compound of rubber and cotton fibre,

which, in our judgment, is better than a leather sole ever dared to be. It has many advantages over leather and not any disadvantages that are of any consequence. It is barely possible that now and then a fibre sole may not give the maximum of wear. When it does not we stand ready to replace it exactly the same as we did on leather soles, and our experience of a year has proven that the percentage of trouble on Fibre Soles is much less than on leather soles.

A second illustration is rubber heels. We were the first manufacturers and distributors of men's shoes that appreciated the extra service and comfort of rubber heels over leather heels, and met that demand by carrying a full line of men's shoes with O'Sullivan heels attached. We used O'Sullivan heels because when we make a substitution we always use the best.

## YOUR REMEDY

We have written the above in a straightforward, businesslike manner, trying to give you absolute facts that can be proven; not trying to mislead or resort to any of the cheap tactics of ordinary advertising. We have the largest chain of retail shoe stores in the city of New York, and are of the opinion that we are selling more pairs than any other individual concern in that territory, and this, together with our system of eliminating all unnecessary expenses of distribution between the factory and the consumer, makes it possible for us to sell shoes much under even a reasonable prevailing price. **We simply want to go into partnership with the consumers of Washington on popular priced shoes, and as our volume increases, give the customers an advantage of a decrease in our gross profit.** It you join with us it means that you and every other Beck customer can rest assured that you are profiting by the **saving** made by our growing volume.

We are endeavoring to give service by placing stores in your immediate neighborhoods just as fast as we get locations and get the stores in condition. **WATCH US GROW**, and if you want to **SAVE MONEY** and **BUY RIGHT** try the Beck-Hazzard shoes the next time you purchase. Remember that nearly three people are buying Beck-Hazzard shoes in 1917 where one bought them in 1916, and two people bought them in 1916 where one bought them in 1915—**SOME** growth. **SAVE YOUR MONEY AND JOIN THE CROWD!**

**THE BECK SHOE COMPANY**  
New York City

*R. P. Hazzard*  
President.

