

[Act No. 2520., April 03, 1915]

**AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE SELECTION OF ASSESSORS FOR
COURTS OF FIRST INSTANCE AND JUSTICE OF THE PEACE
COURTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF MINDANAO AND SULU AND
FOR SPECIAL PROCEDURE FOR THE DETERMINATION OF CIVIL
AND CRIMINAL CASES IN WHICH THE PARTIES ARE
MOHAMMEDANS OR PAGANS.**

By authority of the United States, be it enacted by the Philippine Commission, that:

SECTION 1. *Assessors in Courts of First Instance and of justices of the peace.*- During the trial of criminal and civil cases in Courts of First Instance and of justices of the peace in the Department of Mindanao and Sulu, assessors may be selected to assist and sit with the judge of first instance or justice of the peace in such trial.

SECTION 2. *Selection, summons, etc., of assessors.*-Such assessors shall be selected from the list prepared in accordance with the provisions of Act Numbered One hundred ninety, and the procedure as regards selection, summons, compensation, oath of office, and duties to be performed by the assessors shall be those prescribed in said Act except that in the justice of the peace courts the rate of compensation shall be not to exceed one peso per diem: *Provided*, That criminal cases in which the accused, and in civil cases in which the parties, or any of them, are Mohammedans or pagans, judges of first instance or justices of the peace may, when such action is deemed wise, appoint as assessors persons not included in such list, and in making such appointment judges of first instance and justices of the peace shall give preference, wherever possible, to "cadis" or "kalis" and "panditas" or such Mohammedans and pagans as are versed in their local laws and customs.

SECTION 3. *Mohammedan laws and customs.*-Judges of the Court of First Instance and justices of the peace deciding civil cases in which the parties are Mohammedans or pagans, when such action is deemed wise, may modify the application of the law of the Philippine Islands, except laws of the United States applicable to the Philippine Islands, taking into account local laws and customs: *Provided*, that such modification shall not be in conflict with the basic principles of the laws of the United States of America.

SECTION 4. *Date of effective.*- This Act shall take effect on its passage.

Enacted, April 3, 1915.



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