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THE PREFACE.

**T**HIS small collection, singular in the matter, is more so by the manner in which it is done; it may be considered not only as a *master-piece* of the fancy of the Antients, but as a very remarkable monument of their talents, and taste in engraving and designing.

My real opinion is, that the greatest part of these stones have not been executed before the empire of Augustus and Tiberius. I think it also probable, that several of them are the figures of *Elephantis*, the Greek courtezan, who was the first that had the impudence to compose books upon the choice secrets of her trade.

Suetonius says, that Tiberius had these books placed in some of his rooms at Caprea, which were ornamented with bawdy pictures, answering the purposes of this voluptuous tyrant. *Cubicula plurifariam disposita tabellis ac*